SAMUEL HUNTINGTON'S UGLY MISTAKES
PAUL STARR, ENRIQUE KRAUZE

IS THE DOLLAR DOOMED?
NIALL FERGUSON

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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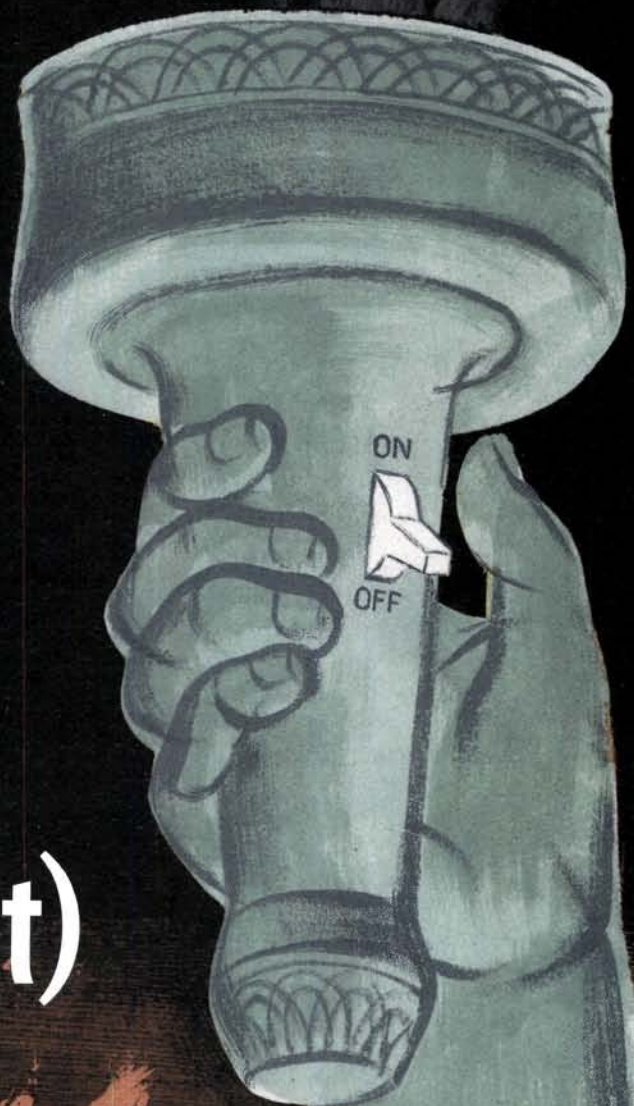
Reagan Myths
RYAN LIZZA, VLADISLAV M. ZUBOK, THE EDITORS

THE RETURN OF REALISM (And Why We'll Regret It)

LAWRENCE F. KAPLAN



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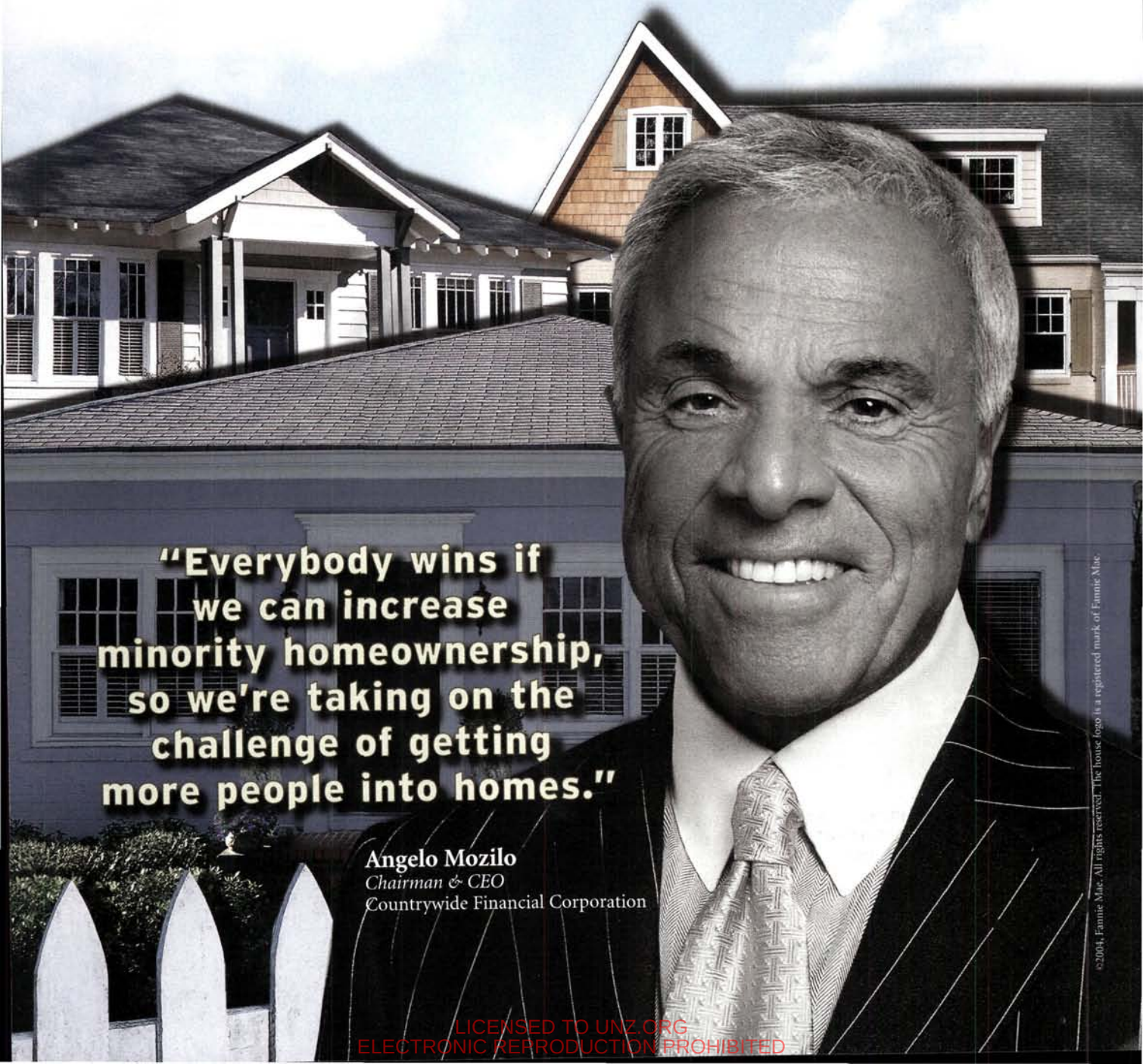
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Angelo Mozilo
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Updated daily. On the Web at www.tnr.com.

THE NEW REPUBLIC
A JOURNAL OF POLITICS AND THE ARTS

JUNE 21, 2004 WASHINGTON, D.C. ISSUE 4,666 VOLUME 230

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CORRESPONDENCE

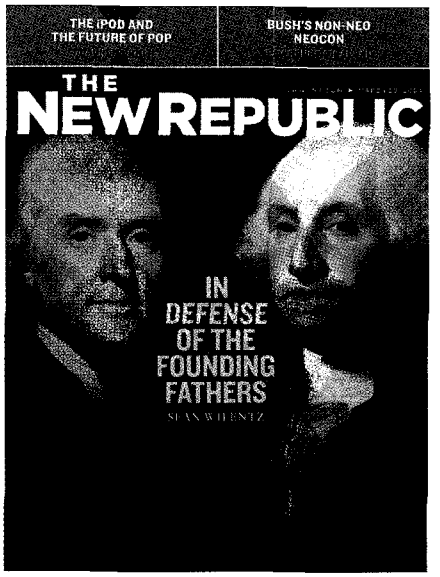
SLAVE TO THE STATES

SEAN WILENTZ ENERGETICALLY slays the straw men he manufactures ("The Details of Greatness," March 29). He accuses me of "discrediting the Enlightenment" (which I have always praised) and of trying "to resuscitate the dead (and deservedly dead) tradition of the Federalists"—though I wrote that I did not want John Adams to win in 1800. I agree with Henry Adams that his great-grandfather forfeited his right to the White House with the Alien and Sedition acts. He says that Timothy Pickering was not simply a "lofty abolitionist"—true, and that is why I wrote that his efforts "were not *solely altruistic*," *giving the same political* motives Wilentz lists. He says that the three-fifths clause was not the only factor in play in the 1800 vote and that I neglected what went on in Pennsylvania. Actually, I wrote: "If Pennsylvania's electoral vote had been blocked by the state legislature (as it almost was), he [Jefferson] would have lost even with the slave count. On the other hand, if Republicans had succeeded in making Pennsylvania vote as a bloc Electoral College, he could have won even without the slave count—but only provided [Aaron] Burr succeeded in sneaking a Republican legislature into Albany, to give Jefferson the New York electors. There were many variables."

All I say is that, despite many hypothetical votes that would not have depended on Jefferson's twelve-vote bonus from counting the slaves, that margin was critical as the votes were actually cast—which is not a "canard," as Wilentz says, but simple fact. Nor do I say, as he claims, that Federalists were a majority in 1800. Other votes proved that was not the case, but I was not talking about other votes. Wilentz says I praise Burr in general; I say only that he made no overt move to win the 1801 runoff election. He says that I denigrate "Jefferson's political skills" in that matter (which included encouragement to threats of violence if the Congress did what it had a constitutional right to do—a thing that even Jefferson's friend Albert Gallatin deplored).

What Wilentz does not invent, he distorts. He claims, for instance, that my attention to the federal ratio is "badly skewed" because it affected only the House of Representatives. But the House count provided most of the votes in the caucuses that chose presidential nominees and most of the votes in the electoral college that elected them. This contributed to our having slave-owning presidents and Supreme Court nominees. He thinks that I neglect support for slavery in the North because I had not read James Banner's *To the Hartford Convention*. He is wrong on both counts. Of course I read Banner's book; I even cited it in a 1999 work, *A Necessary Evil*. But I did not need it to know about pro-slavery forces in the North, which, as I frequently note, reflected Northern Democrats' protection of their slave-owning allies in the South, with their swollen votes in caucuses and the college as well as in the House. Northern allies of the slave power, such as Martin Van Buren, deftly manipulated the Senate for this purpose. I do not expect to be given the immense amount of space allotted to Wilentz's omnium-gatherum of charges, but I address them in an afterword I have just written for my book's paperback edition.

Still, it is important to note here that Wilentz not only demonizes critics of Jefferson (whether Pickering or Joseph Ellis), but also divinizes Jefferson. He dilates rapturously on Jefferson's "greatest act of humane egalitarianism during his presidency," the 1808 ban on the international slave trade. He accuses me and many others of a crude "economic determinism" in noting that the South wanted the slave trade abolished because it drove down the market on domestic slave sales. He wrongly assigns to me a belief that this economic motive arose because of the cotton boom, noting that Jefferson earlier attacked the international trade in his draft of the Declaration of Independence. What Jefferson objected to was George III's veto on Virginia's effort to abolish the trade—a move made by the state not from opposition to slavery as such, but because of the competition offered from abroad. When other slave states also had a surplus, they, too, excluded the trade. By the time of Jefferson's "greatest act of humane egalitarianism" in 1808, all of them but South Carolina had already banned it. That economic interests entered into their decision is obvious, but to admit this is "crude" according to Wilentz, though he disqualifies Pickering's opposition to slavery because he also had a political stake in the matter. Wilentz lives in a world of black and white, demons and demigods. It is not a grownup world.



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THE NEW REPUBLIC (ISSN 0028-6583), Vol. 230, Number 23, Issue 4,666, June 21, 2004. (Printed in the United States on June 10, 2004.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated April 12 & 19, June 7 & 14, July 5 & 12, August 16 & 23, September 13 & 20, November 29 & December 6, and December 27, 2004 through January 10, 2005) at 1331 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005. Telephone (202) 508-4444. For advertising inquiries, please contact Mandy Hansen at (202) 508-4444 or our NY sales office at (212) 465-8447. Yearly subscriptions, $79.97; foreign, $119.97 (U.S. funds); Canada, $99.97 (U.S. funds). Back issues, $8.00 domestic and $10.00 foreign/Canada (includes postage & handling). © 2003 by The New Republic, LLC. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C. and additional mailing offices. Rights and permissions: fax (202) 628-9383. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. For hard copy reprints, call (202) 508-4444. Microform, Canadian Periodical Index, and CD-ROM are available through ProQuest, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone (800) 521-0600. Postmaster: Send changes of address to The New Republic, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. Member: Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope (e-mail address: letters@tnr.com). For subscription inquiries or problems call (800) 827-1289 or visit our website at www.thenewrepublic.com.

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SEAN WILENTZ RESPONDS:
Garry Wills is silent about the many glaring and costly factual errors reported in my review. He rebuts charges I never made and misconstrues others I did make. But I am glad he has retreated from his central contentions, that, "if real votes alone had been counted, Adams would have been returned to office" in 1800 and that "slave power" made Jefferson president. The best evidence, affirmed in an excellent forthcoming study by John Ferling, shows the Jefferson Republicans won a majority of the popular vote—Wills's "real votes"—and the electoral college vote. Federalist manipulation of the electoral vote offset the advantage Jefferson gained from the three-fifths rule, yet he won anyway. Wills's concessions and qualifications destroy his book's thesis. No new afterword can salvage it.

BUDGET BUSTING

BY AN OVERSIGHT, TNR DIDN'T GIVE me an opportunity to respond to a letter by J. Bradford DeLong and Peter Orszag, two economists who served in the Clinton administration, and Robert Greenstein of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities ("Uncalculated," June 7 & 14). They took issue with my discussion of budget policy in the Clinton years ("What the Boom Forgot," May 3). They accuse me of three main errors. First, they say I did not "adequately explain" that the long-term budget problem involves Medicare and Medicaid more than Social Security. In fact, every time I mentioned Social Security, I mentioned Medicare in the same sentence. No one could mistake the meaning. Second, they say I appear to be "of two minds" on the dangers of budget deficits. Actually, I said that the economic effects of deficits depend "on circumstances"—they hadn't hurt much yet, but, if they got too high and lasted too long, they might in the future. Finally, they criticize me for focusing on future spending for retirement programs, not recent tax cuts. But they show why this is correct: Over the next 75 years, they report, Medicare and Medicaid spending alone is projected to rise to 10 percent of gross domestic product. Even without Bush's tax cuts, this implies a tax increase of roughly 50 percent. I consider that unfair to our children and risky for the economy. They say it was "unfortunate" progress wasn't made on these issues in the 1990s. I said it was unfortunate that the Clinton administration didn't try.

ROBERT J. SAMUELSON
Columnist, NEWSWEEK *and*
THE WASHINGTON POST
Washington, D.C.

OUT OF BUSINESS

THE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH ON either side of the gay marriage issue doesn't matter ("Perverted," May 3). The issue isn't whether the children or the partners are "better off" in traditional marriages. It is a simple matter of whether it is the business of government to define how one lives one's life. I maintain that it is not the business of government and that "marriage" should be solely a religious construct. People should be able to enter into social contracts that define the limits of their relationships. Government and society have no business intervening except to prevent the abuse of minors and to enforce the terms of the contract (or, in extreme cases, like slavery or coercion, void the contract).

DALE F. OGDEN
San Pedro, California

edm THE EMERGING DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY
THE ELECTRONIC STRATEGY CENTER FOR BUILDING THE NEW MAJORITY

As they prepare for the July Convention, Democrats face a critical question – how wide a coalition do they want to build? The solid Democratic "base" represents less then 50% of the electorate. But many moderates and independents are closer to the Dems than Republicans on major issues. GOP victories in 2000 and 2002 required extensive borrowing of Democratic themes and programs.

Ruy Teixeira

In fact Republicans have only won national elections when they successfully portray themselves as closer to "average Americans" than "elitist" Democrats. Their strategy often succeeds because key swing groups like moderate white-collar suburbanites, socially tolerant evangelicals and non-union blue-collar workers and small businessmen clearly see that they are not represented in the Democratic Party in the same way as the party's traditional liberal constituencies.

In recent years, however, Republicans have embraced a bitter and vindictive vision of "politics as warfare" that alienates and disturbs many "middle of the road" voters. Democrats can win these voters' support if they offer them a meaningful "seat at the table" in the Democratic Party.

Liberals may worry that including these voters will move the party to the right. But liberals will actually have greater political influence if these centrist groups are inside a broad democratic coalition rather then outside.

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Rigged

TRB FROM WASHINGTON

In January 2002, Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Walter Kansteiner took the podium at a conference organized by the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies and said something remarkable. "For too long," he declared, "official Washington has been gripped by the perception that the United States has no vital interests in sub-Saharan Africa. Nothing could be further from the truth." The statement was remarkable largely because one of the people in "official Washington" supposedly "gripped" by that fallacy was none other than his boss, George W. Bush, who, in 2000, had said Africa "doesn't fit into the national strategic interests as far as I can see them."

Was Kansteiner forced to publicly retract his words? Not at all. In fact, the person retracting his words has been the president. Over the past several years, Bush and his foreign policy team have done something almost no one expected when they took office—they have made Africa a priority. It would be an uplifting story, the fulfillment of countless bleeding-heart dreams, except for one thing. Africa is a Bush priority for one reason: oil.

For critics who consider President Bush's talk of global democracy a sham, and suspect it conceals a hidden agenda to control the world's supply of oil, Africa is a kind of Rosetta stone. The continent's west coast—from Nigeria in the north to Angola in the south—is America's fastest-growing source of oil and gas. Over the next decade, according to the National Intelligence Council, Africa's share of the U.S. petroleum market will rise from 15 to 25 percent. As Kansteiner has put it, "African oil has become of national strategic interest to us."

For an administration worried about the stability of longtime oil cow Saudi Arabia, West Africa is a godsend. Its oil is high-quality, easy to refine, and largely offshore, which means political unrest is less likely to disrupt production. It's half the distance from the Persian Gulf. And, because most West African oil producers don't belong to OPEC, they can pump out as much crude as they want, potentially lowering prices.

That's the good news. The bad news is that many of the regimes that control this new oil make Saudi Arabia look like Sweden. In the Middle East, the president is supposedly renouncing the decades-long bargain in which America blesses Arab dictatorships in return for their hydrocarbons. But, in West Africa, his administration is building another, equally ugly arrangement to replace it.

Last month, President José Eduardo dos Santos of Angola—Africa's second-largest oil producer—met Bush for the second time. For the leader of a midsized African country, two Oval Office visits is unusual. It's even more unusual, given that President Bush has said he will reward only those African countries that "invest in the health and education of their people. ... Corrupt regimes that give nothing to their people deserve nothing from us." That statement probably elicited a chuckle at Human Rights Watch, which estimates that, between 1997 and 2002, 9 percent of Angola's gross domestic product simply disappeared. Dos Santos's government, in other words, stole roughly as much money as it spent on health and education combined. Luckily for the Angolan leader, he has other credentials that matter in Washington: The night before his first Oval Office meeting, he was feted at a dinner sponsored by ExxonMobil and ChevronTexaco, both of which are planning major West African expansions.

Two weeks after his meeting with dos Santos, Bush received the leader of Africa's third-largest oil producer, Omar Bongo of Gabon. In power 37 years, Bongo is the elder statesman of African tyrants. He reportedly owns more real estate in Paris than any other foreign leader, and the State Department recently said the country's "human rights record remained poor." But that doesn't seem to bother the White House. Gabon's military now receives U.S. training, and soon after his meeting with Bush, Bongo's government received its first International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan since 2002. Asked about the meeting, White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan said he didn't know if the two men discussed oil. But Bongo told the BBC the president had urged him to increase production.

Then there is Teodoro Obiang Nguema, president of tiny, oil-rich Equatorial Guinea. Obiang, who has held power for 24 years, won his last election with 97 percent of the vote, while the country's main opposition leader languished in jail. In 1998, according to the IMF, his government received $130 million in oil revenue, and Obiang simply pocketed $96 million of it. Although three of every four Equatoguineans suffer malnutrition, between 1997 and 2002, Obiang spent just over 1 percent of his budget on health, by far the lowest of the nine African countries the IMF surveyed. According to a 2002 State Department report, there is "little evidence that the country's oil wealth is being devoted to the public good."

Just months before that State Department report, the White House decided to reopen America's embassy in the capital, Malabo. It had closed in 1995, after President Clinton's ambassador criticized Obiang's repression and then found himself the subject of government death threats. But oil executives—including CMS Energy executive William McCormick, who donated $100,000 to the Bush-Cheney inaugural committee—lobbied the Bush administration to reestablish an American presence. In February 2002, Obiang triumphantly visited Washington. According to an article by Ken Silverstein in *Salon*, six U.S. oil companies produced a booklet for the occasion, praising him as Equatorial Guinea's "first democratically elected president."

Realists might defend the Bush administration's decision to build in Africa the kind of unholy alliances it supposedly rejects in the Middle East. After all, in the Arab world, dictatorship produces Al Qaeda. In Gabon, Angola, and Equatorial Guinea, where the populations are mostly Christian and animist, Islamists can't exploit U.S.-sponsored oppression. But, even if it isn't channeled into fundamentalism, anti-government rage will sooner or later imperil U.S. oil investments in Africa, too. And it will further degrade America's reputation as a country genuinely committed to democracy and human rights. The Bush administration has already damaged that reputation more profoundly than many thought possible. Now it seems set to extend America-hatred to a new frontier.

PETER BEINART

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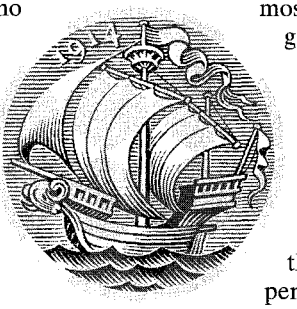
Reagan

THE MEMORY HOLE: it was one of the most pernicious instruments of the totalitarianism that Ronald Reagan so grandly and so effectively consecrated himself to fight and even to defeat. Here in America, we have our own culture of forgetfulness, more benign, of course, but not less injurious to the shared consciousness of the past that is one of the foundations of a living society. In the aftermath of Ronald Reagan's death, there is much glib obituary chatter about his contribution to the end of the cold war, but it all makes the cold war seem so distant and its end so inevitable. In truth, the cold war was a terrifying and titanic conflict between world powers and world principles, and it conferred upon those who lived it, not least because of the sickening thermonuclear power of the states coldly at war, a tense experience of history's contingency that they will never forget. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and its empire? It was impossible, even irresponsible, to imagine it.

And so the first thing that must be said in grateful memory of Ronald Reagan is that he imagined it, that he grasped the essentials, that he was not afraid. The quality of his mind aside, he never lost his head. What was most important to him was in fact what was most important to the future of the world. Was his anti-communism an obsession? Then it was a proper obsession, a noble obsession. No, Reagan did not bring down communism; communism fell of its own moral and political and social and economic failures. But he defied it into its final collapse. With his irrefutable demonstration of the philosophical and technological superiority of America, Reagan embarrassed his enemy into oblivion. With this one accomplishment, he won greatness.

What was so startling, so subversive, about Ronald Reagan was his happiness. It was his standpoint on the entirety of existence. His country, his marriage, his career: All of it, the public and the private, could be adequately captured by a grin. A great philosopher once observed that the world of the happy man is different from the world of the unhappy man. It was understandable that most of America preferred to inhabit the happy man's world, not least because his predecessor seemed most quickened by the unhappy man's world. And in Reagan's happiness there is a lesson for post-Reagan conservatism, too. For many of the conservatives who now call themselves his heirs show no understanding of the moral power of joy. They despise so many Americans of so many kinds that soon they appear to despise America, the actually existing America. They come to deny, but Reagan came to affirm. He loved the actually existing America. There was only one thing stronger in him than his ideology, and it was his geniality. It used to be said of Reagan in Washington that he was easy to hate but impossible to dislike: this was Beltway humanism.



But Reagan's happiness had the weaknesses of its strengths. It was magical; and like all magic it stood in no true relationship to evidence. The challenge for the happy man, after all, is to recognize that his happiness is also what separates him from his world, that he may be happy but the world is not. In the social policies of his administration, Reagan never rose to that challenge. A warm man presided over a cold government. A fortunate man was indifferent to a vast amount of misfortune, and promoted success into a sign of virtue. A humble man did not like that he was also an accountable man. The essentials concentrated Reagan's mind, but they also simplified it. In the way he lived and in the way he governed, Reagan robbed complexity of its prestige, which was a great disservice to a country always impatient for a quick fix and a good feeling. Like many of the Democrats whom he detested (but not personally, of course), Reagan instructed that it was no longer coherent, intellectually and politically, to fight tyranny abroad and misery at home with the same fervor, to honor American power and American justice with the same fidelity. If this was how he revolutionized American politics, it was not entirely for the better.

Reagan's almost regal funeral brings to mind, alas, also the most cynical aspect of his governance: its dependence upon stagecraft. The bereavement of millions of Americans notwithstanding, the funeral looks like one last exercise in the politics of event-planning. But then Reagan understood, perhaps more naturally than any politician of his time, that illusion is a significant part of reality. A country cannot live only by realism. It needs ritual, too; and in the ritual of Ronald Reagan's passing we salute not only a remarkable man, the most unexpected hero in American history, but also two of America's greatest contributions to the world: our uncanny freedom, our uncanny cheer. ■

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NOTEBOOK

What We Saw at the Revolution

WE HAD OUR FIRST LOOK AT Ronald Reagan the other day. He is being type-cast as a nice-guy, national political leader. His handlers are the California promoters, Spencer & Roberts. If he beats Pat Brown for governor he will be considered for the Presidency, according to David Broder, *New York Times* political writer. ... Still Reagan is less imposing than expected, about middle height with an air of modest decency, a fine crop of hair, and a homogenized mind. "One of the great problems of economics," he explained, "is unemployment." The crowd cheered. "For every ounce of federal help we get we surrender an ounce of personal freedom." "There's no such thing as left or right any more; it's up or down." Steady cheers right along; it was a National Press Club audience.

—"Reagan for President?" TRB, July 2, 1966

Ronald Reagan

REAGAN'S IDEAS MAY BE SIMPLE, but the pattern of his thought is complex. He has a comprehensive worldview that can coherently explain the cosmos. From his ideology, Reagan infers the truth of facts and the need for policies. When facts prove mistaken or policies have unexpected consequences, he can shift ground without making any fundamental change in his beliefs. Perhaps the facts or the policies were the wrong inferences, perhaps they were compromised by his opponents: he can always explain what goes wrong. Criticism of his statements or policies never touches his central beliefs. These attacks may actually confirm for him the duplicitous character of his opposition, since he *knows* his critics have a distinct point of view. They are not open about their premises; he is.

With Reagan, facts don't determine the case. Facts don't make his beliefs true. His beliefs give life to the facts, which are parables tailored to have a moral. If one fact doesn't serve, another will. Time and again, Presidential assistants have told White House reporters that even if the President missed a fact, his general point was still correct: what's an extra zero or two when we're talking about real waste and abuse in social programs?

—"Reagan the Unassailable," Sidney Blumenthal, September 12, 1983

A YEAR AGO THE PHRASE "REAGAN Doctrine" did not even have a meaning. Today its meaning is clear, and its promise, for the realists, a present danger.

To be sure, before 1985 the Reagan Doctrine was a term used often, but indiscriminately. It meant any part of the Reagan foreign policy that critics found offensive. It was most popular with Soviet bloc spokesmen. For a time in the East European countries it was to mean "the possibility of waging and winning a limited nuclear war using preemptive offensive strike weapons such as cruise and Pershing missiles" (Prague radio, February 1984). According to Nicaraguan foreign minister Miguel D'Escoto (April 9, 1984), it was "the right of a country when it believes its interests are best served to practice covert activities." Moscow even stretched it once to mean establishing "axes and triangles and other military political organizations" using Middle Eastern countries from Saudi Arabia to Turkey as part of "an experimental strategy of setting up broad fronts against the Socialist world."

It no longer means whatever the user wants it to mean. Since President Reagan's 1985 State of the Union address, it has come to mean something very specific: American support for anti-communist revolution as the centerpiece of a revived and revised policy of containment. In effect, ten years after Vietnam, a coherent policy reasserting the return of active American intervention in the world has been formulated.

—"The Poverty of Realism," Charles Krauthammer, February 17, 1986

IT'S NOTHING SHORT OF DELICIOUS that contempt for democracy should have done Reagan in. For six years, democracy has been the biggest frustration of the president's opponents. As the November 29 *Economist* puts it: "In America more than most countries, politicians and scribblers like to thunder in the name of the people. They sounded silly doing that against a president whom the people loved."

It seemed to us, the carping critics, that this man was not terribly bright, not terribly thoughtful or well-informed, not terribly honest, and in most other ways not up to the most important job in the world. But a large majority of people seemed not to mind. And so a gradual consensus grew that if he lacked conventional mental and moral assets, he had some kind of special magic. ...

Democracy is a terrible inconvenience. "The Salvadoran guerrillas or

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the Sandinistas don't have to worry about all this when they deal with the Cubans and the Russians," a *contra* leader complained to James LeMoyne of the *New York Times*, referring to Congress, public opinion, the press, the law, and other impedimenta of the American way. The Reagan administration, on whom democracy had lavished its greatest blessings, couldn't be bothered with democracy's inconveniences either.
—*"The Case for Glee," TRB, December 22, 1986*

WHAT IF REAGAN HAD CONCERNED himself with personnel? I don't mean he should have fussed over every political job in the administration, all 6,000 or so. But what about treasury secretary and White House chief of staff? Reagan swallowed without a moment's reflection the job swap that sent James Baker to Treasury and [Donald] Regan to the White House. Regan lacked the political skills to be an effective chief of staff, which might have occurred to Reagan if he'd taken the time to think about it. Regan also let the president take the one big risk of his second term, the arms sale to Iran, and it was a dumb one. Baker wouldn't have allowed it. Reagan didn't pay much attention to his national security advisers either. Had he, he'd have noticed that Bud McFarlane was cracking under the pressure and that John Poindexter, a fellow who blithely lied to the press about the Grenada invasion, was singularly unsuited for the post. Reagan couldn't be bothered. ...

Reagan would have been better off if he'd never seen an opinion poll during his presidency. Poll numbers became an obsession, both for him and his aides. His popularity had to be kept up at all costs, they thought, or else he'd be powerless. But the Reagan crowd didn't want him to use his power much either. That might cause his popularity to plummet, which would mean he'd lose power—circular logic if ever I heard it. So Reagan husbanded his power.
—*"Nap-Master Ronnie," Fred Barnes, January 9 & 16, 1989*

I FELT POWERFULLY ON THAT OCCASION—and have felt more clearly since—that Reaganism was typified more by the patronizing of a president by the people than by the patronizing of the people by a president. Reagan's failures, however unnerving to foreigners, never seemed to threaten Americans. He was too insignificant for that. The lapses were embarrassments rather than warnings—and amusing rather than unsettling. Eventually the amusement even stretched to the president himself: by the last couple of years, he was making his own Reagan jokes. But the essential atmosphere was a lack of threat, a sense of attenuated unreality, which Reagan's critics on the left correctly identified, but incorrectly understood. This constant lack of menace, this comfort with a president, was made possible by a simple fact. He was Americans' creature. They were not his. Paranoids may believe that this advertorial presidency was a conspiracy of the powerful against the powerless, and, in a sense, they're right. But the powerful, in this case, were the people. They manipulated their president from their couches, with the flick of a television remote control. ...

When Americans wanted him to cut taxes, he did so. When they wanted him to stand up to the Soviets, he obliged. When they hankered for détente, he offered them Geneva, then Reykjavik, and finally Moscow. The only crisis of his presidency came when he traded arms with people Americans profoundly distrusted. Even then, like a nervous, otherwise exemplary employee caught engaged in creative accounting, his instinct was to tell his bosses—and to believe—that he hadn't done it.
—*"Mr. Average," Andrew Sullivan, January 9 & 16, 1989*

IF THE WAR-MOVIE SIDE OF REAGAN had been all there was to him, as many of us feared in the early 1980s, all of us might now be radioactive ash. But because he also had his peace-movie side, he turned out to be a somewhat less predictable and altogether less frightening character. He was, in fact, a precursor, a kind of spiritual grandfather, of what has become a standard Hollywood type: the autodidactic, self-righteous, "issue-oriented" star who is full of opinions about politics and who also dabbles in, and is fascinated by, "New Age" phenomena. These last, in Reagan's case, include (besides astrology) extrasensory perception, precognition, sci-fi, people from other planets, and prophecies about Armageddon. It was only natural for him to be interested in such things, given that the Reagans spent most of their lives (as Nancy puts it with screwball reasonableness in [her memoir] *My Turn*) "in the company of show-business people, where superstitions and other non-scientific beliefs are widespread and commonly accepted." ...

Reagan after the war was a dupe, an enthusiastic joiner of Communist front groups. He expresses no remorse about this. On the contrary, in his memoir you can almost hear the fond, indulgent chuckle in his voice as he describes himself during this period. He "was speaking out against the rise of neofascism in America." He "joined just about any organization I could find that guaranteed to save the world." But heck, he just "hadn't given much thought to the threat of communism." Darn that headstrong, idealistic Reagan kid anyway—somebody forgot to tell him about the Moscow trials. ...

Reagan is not, nor has he ever been, ideologically sophisticated. He was a sentimental liberal who became a sentimental conservative. His liberalism was a product of inertia combined with a vague sympathy for the little guy; his conservatism was a product of convenience combined with sympathy for guys who weren't so little—the GE managers and executives who had his ear for eight years. ...

It was Reagan's genius to paste a smiley-face on Armageddon's grinning skull. It turned out he didn't view the biblical account of Armageddon as a prophecy of something inevitable, let alone desirable. He viewed it as a sci-fi story, a cautionary tale about a big awful disaster that could and should be prevented. This is a misreading of the text of the Book of Revelation, but Hollywood always rewrites the classics. Too many downbeat endings.

And how was Armageddon to be prevented—or rather, who was to prevent it? Something McFarlane observed about Reagan is instructive on this point. "He sees himself as a romantic, heroic figure who believes in the power of a hero to overcome even Armageddon," McFarlane told [Reagan biographer Lou] Cannon. "I think it may come from Hollywood. Wherever it came from, he believes that the power of a person and an idea could change the outcome of something even as terrible as Armageddon. ... He didn't see himself as God, but he saw himself as a heroic figure on earth." Not as God, but maybe as God's sidekick.
—*"The Child Monarch," Hendrik Hertzberg, September 9, 1991*

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Reagan's lousy record on terrorism.

Achille Heel

BY RYAN LIZZA

OVER THE LAST week, Ronald Reagan has been rightly celebrated for his clarity and tenacity in facing down communism. Less has been said about how Reagan dealt with terrorism, the national security threat that obsesses us today. Perhaps that is because, while he was unwavering and resolute in his confrontation with the communists, he was passive and uncertain in his response to terrorists.

It's often forgotten, but Reagan's eight years in office witnessed a marked increase in acts of international terrorism. In fact, terrorists killed far more Americans during the 1980s than during the 1990s. In 1983, Hezbollah suicide bombers attacked the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, killing 63. Later that year, in October, a 12,000-pound bomb destroyed the Marine barracks in Beirut, killing 241 Americans—the most deadly terrorist strike against the United States until September 11. In March 1984, Islamic terrorists kidnapped, and eventually killed, a CIA officer. The following month, Hezbollah killed 18 American soldiers in an attack on a restaurant near an airbase in Spain. Two U.S. military personnel were killed by another truck bombing in Beirut in September 1984. Terrorists hijacked an airliner, TWA 847, in July 1985 and killed one American, Navy diver Robert Stethem, whose corpse was thrown out of the plane and onto the runway. In October came the *Achille Lauro* incident, in which Palestinian terrorists commandeered a cruise ship and executed Leon Klinghoffer, a wheelchair–bound American tourist. In December, Abu Nidal terrorists attacked travelers simultaneously at airports in Rome and Vienna. In March 1986, terrorists killed four Americans in Greece. In April, Libyans bombed a West Berlin disco, killing two American soldiers and injuring dozens more. The Libyan attack finally elicited a military response from Reagan, who sent U.S. bombers to attack Tripoli and Benghazi. Commenting on the years of passivity preceding the Libya bombing, Reagan's biographer, Lou Cannon, observed, "For five years of his presidency, Reagan talked tough about terrorism but did virtually nothing in the way of retaliatory action to stop it."

THERE SEEMS TO be a bipartisan consensus today that Reagan's uncertainty in the face of these devastating blows from Islamists bolstered the nascent Al Qaeda's confidence in the early '90s. Reviewing Reagan's response to terrorism, Norman Podhoretz penned a withering critique in *Commentary* in 2002. Podhoretz wrote that, upon Reagan's inauguration, terrorists may have "feared that the hawkish new President might actually launch a military strike against them. Yet, if they had foreseen what was coming under Reagan, they would not have been so fearful." Richard Clarke, who served in the Reagan administration, notes in his new book, *Against All Enemies*, that Reagan's departure from Lebanon "gave terrorists the impression they could attack the United States with relative impunity." Even Bush administration officials have repeatedly noted how the terrorism policies of the Reagan era fed a belief that the United States would not sacrifice blood or treasure to fight Islamic militants. In her testimony before the 9/11 Commission, national security adviser Condoleezza Rice mentioned the retreat from Lebanon and the hijacking of the *Achille Lauro* before noting, "For more than twenty years, the terrorist threat gathered, and America's response across several administrations of both parties was insufficient."

Reagan's failures in Lebanon have long been seen as one of the worst blots on his record. Cannon noted, "If measured in loss of American lives abroad, Lebanon was the greatest disaster of the Reagan presidency." It was "a case study of foreign policy calamity" and the best illustration of "the naïveté, ignorance, and undisciplined internal conflict characteristic of the Reagan presidency." Sent on an ill-defined peacekeeping mission to restore order to the turbulent country, Reagan repeatedly pledged to stay the course. Four days after the devastating car bombing of the Marine barracks, he said "Let me ask those who say we should get out of Lebanon: If we were to leave Lebanon now, what message would that send to those who foment instability and terrorism?" Four months later, we got out of Lebanon. (It was left to Donald Rumsfeld, then Reagan's Middle East envoy, to visit Lebanon's president in his palace bunker and explain that, despite Reagan's promises, the Americans were leaving.) The message this sent to terrorists became clear in 1996, when Osama bin Laden tauntingly declared war against the United States: "We say to the Defense Secretary that his talk can induce a grieving mother to laughter! [A]nd shows the fears that had enshrined you all. Where was this false courage of yours when the explosion in Beirut took place in 1983? You were turned into scattered pits and pieces at that time; 241 mainly Marine soldiers were killed."

After the TWA 847 hijacking in 1985, the administration had been racked by so much terrorism that Reagan appointed Vice President Bush to a special commission to study the problem. But Reagan's advisers, divided along the same hawk/dove rift that defines Bush 43's administration, couldn't reach a consensus on how to respond to terrorism. *The Washington Post* called the disagreement "one of the most profound of Reagan's presidency" and noted that disputes "often paralyzed the administration after a terrorist attack." The split was not settled by Bush's report. When it was released in 1986, it endorsed a less aggressive response to terrorism than Reagan's rhetoric had promised. Asked about the commission's internal squabbling, Bush told re-

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porters, "We haven't been able to solve that problem, and I wish we could have."

The one recommendation Reagan officials did agree on was being violated literally as the terrorism report was being printed in 1986. "The U.S. government," the task force concluded, "will make no concessions to terrorists. It will not pay ransoms, release prisoners, change its policies or agree to other acts that might encourage additional terrorism." Reagan violated that policy by paying a ransom of missiles to the Iranian mullahs in exchange for American hostages.

Ultimately, Reagan hit upon precisely the approach to terrorism that many conservatives condemn today and that John Kerry is often erroneously accused of advocating. That is, the Reagan administration began to treat terrorism as a law enforcement problem. Speaking at a conference in 1988 reviewing the administration's policies, L. Paul Bremer, then ambassador at large for counterterrorism, explained, "We are working to impose the rule of law on terrorists for their criminal actions. Good police work is catching terrorists, and they're being brought more and more to trial."

FINALLY, IT IS impossible to survey Reagan's record on terrorism without looking at Afghanistan, where U.S. policy, no matter how instrumental in bringing about the collapse of the Soviet Union, also helped accelerate the rise of Al Qaeda. There remains a pernicious myth that Reagan's CIA specifically funded bin Laden in Afghanistan. As Peter Bergen's *Holy War, Inc.* and, more recently, Steve Coll's incredible chronicle of spycraft in Afghanistan, *Ghost Wars*, both point out, there is no evidence that the CIA had any dealings with bin Laden. But, as Clarke notes in his book, the Reagan administration either encouraged or acquiesced in the recruitment of Arabs to Afghanistan, and it looked the other way as the Saudis financed bin Laden and helped him set up his training camps. No thought was given to what would happen to all these aggrieved young Arabs from across the Middle East once the war was over.

The billions of dollars that went to the mujahedin, almost all of it by way of Pakistan's intelligence service, had other costs. Perhaps Reagan's biggest mistake was to allow Pakistan to funnel a disproportionate amount of anti-Soviet aid to the brutal Islamist Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who was close to bin Laden, instead of the relatively more moderate, and militarily more effective, Ahmad Shah Massoud. Even after Hekmatyar's virulent anti-Americanism became clear, Reagan did nothing to pressure the Pakistanis to cut off aid to him. (Hekmatyar is still alive and today bedevils U.S. forces in Afghanistan.) Even worse, Pakistan's newly empowered intelligence agency helped create the Taliban and eventually helped integrate Al Qaeda into the Taliban structure.

In Afghanistan, the Reagan administration was brilliant at helping deliver a devastating blow to the Soviets on the battlefield. Unfortunately, it was abysmal at thinking through what the long-term consequences of its actions might be once the war ended. Sound familiar? ■

Reagan the dove.

Soft Power

BY VLADISLAV M. ZUBOK

DEATH, NOT SURPRISINGLY, has secured Ronald Reagan's place in history. In recent days, policy veterans, journalists, and scholars have placed him among the top ranks of twentieth-century presidents. In a *New York Times* op-ed written shortly after Reagan's death, Mikhail Gorbachev, the former Soviet leader, acknowledged Reagan's role in bringing about the end of the cold war. Reagan's conservative admirers go even further. They proclaim him the architect of "victory" against the USSR, citing his support of the anti-communist mujahedin in Afghanistan, of the anti-Soviet Solidarity movement in Poland, and, above all, his Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Former White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan told CNN seven years ago that Gorbachev's failure to convince President Reagan to give up SDI at the Reykjavik summit in 1986 meant it was "all over for the Soviet Union." A memorial plaque in the court of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California, flatly states that Reagan's SDI brought down Soviet communism.

Newly released Soviet documents reveal that Reagan indeed played a role in ending the cold war. Yet, it was not so much because of SDI or the support of anti-Soviet forces around the world. Rather, it was the sudden emergence of another Reagan, a peacemaker and supporter of nuclear disarmament—whom conservatives opposed—that rapidly produced a new U.S.-Soviet détente. This détente facilitated Gorbachev's radical overhaul of Soviet domestic and foreign policy—changes that brought the USSR crashing down and that would have been impossible had Reagan remained the hawk conservatives now celebrate.

IN RETROSPECT, IT'S hard to see SDI as anything but a bit player in the final act of the cold war. In 1983, the year Reagan announced the program to stop Soviet missiles in space (immediately dubbed "star wars"), the Soviet leadership convened a panel of prominent scientists to assess whether SDI posed a long-term security threat. The panel's report remains classified, but various leaks point to the main finding (one that mirrored the assessment of independent U.S. scientists): In the next decade or even beyond, SDI would not work. The rumor circulating in politburo circles was that "two containers of nails hurled

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into space" would be enough to confuse and overwhelm U.S. anti-missile defenses. In a compromise decision between Kremlin leaders and military commanders reached by 1985, a number of R&D labs received limited funds to look into possible countermeasures to SDI. The budget of the Soviet "anti-SDI" program, a fraction of the huge allocations to the Soviet military-industrial complex, remained at the same modest level through the rest of the '80s.

Gorbachev feared SDI less for the military threat it posed to the USSR than for the practical threat it posed to his political agenda. The young general secretary belonged to a generation shaped by the denunciations of Stalinist crimes, the cultural liberalization of the 1960s, and East-West détente; this generation wanted to reform the Soviet Union and end the confrontation with the United States. But the reformists remained a minority and operated in a milieu of anti-American paranoia. As a result, Gorbachev was frustrated by the Reagan administration's hawkish actions—such as increased military assistance to Afghanistan, provocative naval exercises near Soviet coasts, and the CIA's unrelenting "spy war" against the KGB.

The Soviets interpreted SDI as an outgrowth of this renewed American aggressiveness, which made it harder for Gorbachev to push his reforms. As Boris Ponomarev, a Communist apparatchik, grumbled in early 1986, "Let the Americans change their thinking instead.... Are you against military strength, which is the only language that imperialism understands?" Gorbachev admitted in his memoirs that he was initially too cautious to resist this pressure. At the politburo, he adopted hard-line language, describing the American president as a "troglodyte" in November 1985.

Still, the early interactions between Gorbachev and Reagan revealed that there might be enough common ground between the two leaders to allow Gorbachev to press ahead: As it happened, both men were closet nuclear abolitionists. For all his outward toughness, Reagan connected nuclear threats to the prophecy of Armageddon and, under the influence of his wife, Nancy, who saw ending the cold war as an opportunity to save the president's legacy from the taint of Iran-Contra, wanted to be remembered as a peacemaker. Gorbachev, likewise, saw eliminating the danger of nuclear confrontation between the superpowers as his top priority. When Gorbachev participated in a strategic game simulating the Soviet response to a nuclear attack shortly after coming to power, he allegedly refused to press the nuclear button "even for training purposes."

Though the continuing U.S.-Soviet confrontation obscured the common anti-nuclear agenda for much of the '80s, the shared goal surfaced suddenly in a dramatic exchange at the Reykjavik summit in October 1986. Gorbachev proposed eliminating all ballistic missiles. When Reagan demurred, Gorbachev raised the ante. Both leaders then began proposing that more and more categories of weapons be abolished until they had agreed upon total disarmament. But Gorbachev refused to cut anything if SDI remained, prompting the frustrated Reagan to interject: "What the hell use will anti-ballistic missiles or anything else be if we eliminate nuclear weapons?" The Soviet leader held firm, at which point the summit collapsed and Reagan returned home feeling angry and cheated.

Though conservatives lauded Reagan for courageously avoiding what they saw as a Soviet trap, administration insiders were furious at the president for even broaching the idea of a nuclear-free world. They were right to be concerned. By the end of 1987, Reagan had begun to distance himself from the extreme hawks who opposed any negotiations (the most prominent of them, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, left the administration in 1987) and was relying increasingly on the pragmatic advice of Secretary of State George Shultz. In December 1987, the president and Gorbachev met in Washington to sign a treaty eliminating intermediate-range missiles. And, by June 1988, Reagan was kissing Russian babies in Red Square and had nonchalantly dropped the "evil empire" label he had affixed to the Soviet Union in 1983.

For his part, Gorbachev used the increasingly warm encounters with Reagan as capital for domestic reforms. Soviet journalists, as well as the entire international media, covered the summits, transforming Gorbachev into a TV star. Back home, millions of Soviets felt proud of their leader for the first time in years. Reykjavik, in particular, increased Gorbachev's domestic standing; the Soviet audience appreciated his tough talk with Reagan, but not as much as his "struggle for peace." This enhanced stature allowed Gorbachev to make a series of crucial changes in the aftermath of various U.S.-Soviet summits: the release of the Nobel Laureate and political prisoner Andrei Sakharov in December 1986 and the introduction of glasnost came on the heels of Reykjavik; the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan in January 1988 came just after the Washington summit the previous December; the liberalization of the communist political system began with the announcement of parliamentary elections during the summer of 1988, just after Reagan's visit to Moscow.

IT WAS PERHAPS inevitable that some of Reagan's former advisers would begin to rewrite his legacy using their hard-line script. Back in the '80s, however, this script produced nothing but new cold war crises, an accelerated arms race, and a huge budget deficit. With the notable exception of the support of Polish Solidarity, U.S. measures to "bleed" the Soviet Union only bred mutual fears of war. The most notorious symbol of U.S. "victory" in the cold war, SDI, still remains an unfulfilled promise 20 years later.

It is not clear how much vision regarding the end of Soviet communism Ronald Reagan had. What Reagan certainly had in abundance was luck and instinct. He was lucky that a new reformist leadership came to power in Moscow looking for a partner to end the cold war. He sensed a historic opportunity in his relationship with Gorbachev and finally seized on it. It was Reagan the peacemaker, not the cold warrior, who made the greatest contribution to history. One only wishes more Americans were aware of this paradox as they pay homage to their fortieth president. ■

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LET'S KEEP GOOD TEACHERS TEACHING

Thousands of this year's college graduates will become teachers in America's public schools. Unfortunately, nearly half will quit within five years.

By now, many of the nation's newly minted college graduates have made basic career decisions and either have found jobs in their chosen fields or are pursuing them. A large number will become public school teachers.

Education majors and other new recruits decide to teach because they believe in education and public service and see teaching as a rewarding opportunity to work with children. These new graduates will be joined by a number of people who bring expertise from their work in other fields as they fulfill a desire to teach.

The teacher retention crisis

Despite the enthusiasm of these new hires, it's proving almost impossible to recruit the 200,000 well-prepared new teachers needed every year in our public schools—and it's especially tough to find the 70,000 required annually to teach in high-poverty urban areas, where salaries are lowest and working conditions are often the least desirable. But the biggest challenge is *keeping* new teachers in the profession—and, as a result, school districts are struggling with the ongoing problem of teacher turnover.

Too often, effective teachers are driven out of the profession, confounding efforts to ensure that there's a well-qualified teacher in every classroom.

Teacher retention has become a real crisis. The statistics are alarming. Nearly half of new teachers quit within the first five years. And fully half of those hired by urban schools leave within just three years.

It would be one thing if this exodus served to weed out those teachers who are not suited to the profession, but too often effective teachers are driven out, confounding efforts to ensure that there's a well-qualified teacher in every classroom.

Salaries that lag far behind those of other professions are obviously a critical problem. The AFT is working to develop innovative compensation structures, which may help. But low pay isn't the only issue driving teachers away. They're frustrated with school budget cuts, the constant pressure to do more with less, excessive bureaucracy, big classes, and insufficient education support for students to meet higher standards. Teachers want a real voice in school planning, and more opportunities for mentoring, professional development, and advancement.

Studies have shown that high-quality teachers are the number one in-school factor in raising student achievement. And recent polling reveals that most Americans understand this. So, let's make the investment necessary to bring the best and brightest graduates to our nation's classrooms—and keep them there.

To learn more about quality teaching, visit our Web site at www.aft.org.

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Rumsfeld's intelligence takeover.

Power Grab

BY SPENCER ACKERMAN

If not for the Abu Ghraib torture scandal, most Americans probably never would have heard of Stephen Cambone. For more than a year, Cambone has served as the first-ever undersecretary of defense for intelligence, but he has lived a cloistered existence at the Pentagon. During most of his infrequent public appearances on Capitol Hill, Cambone has been a silent presence hovering over the shoulder of his boss, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. But then came Abu Ghraib. Last month, the Senate Armed Services Committee called Cambone to testify about the role military intelligence officers played in the treatment—and mistreatment—of inmates at the Iraqi prison.

His testimony was less than illuminating. Cambone, the Pentagon's newly minted intelligence chief, repeatedly maintained that he was unaware of the "scope and scale" of the torture at the prison, site of perhaps the largest military intelligence operation in Iraq, until he read Major General Antonio Taguba's report in early May. This, even though investigations into the abuse had been underway for months. He insisted that detention policy was the province of Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith, even though he told Congress that Major General George Miller, the head of the Guantanamo Bay prison complex, visited Iraq in August 2003 "with my encouragement, to determine if the flow of information to [General Ricardo Sanchez's command] and back to the subordinate commands could be improved." Furthermore, the Abu Ghraib intelligence chief Colonel Thomas Pappas reportedly followed up on Miller's recommendations with a briefing memo titled "Draft Update for the Secretary of Defense."

If Cambone's testimony sounds murky, it's indicative of the lack of clarity that has surrounded his entire office, the Pentagon's newest senior post. Cambone's position is merely supposed to consolidate oversight of the Pentagon's intelligence assets like the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the intelligence branches of the uniformed services. "That's not intrinsically objectionable," says Steven Aftergood, an intelligence expert at the Federation of American Scientists, "except for the fact that the arrangement is so lacking in transparency." Asked if he understands what exactly Cambone's office does, a senior aide to the Senate Armed Services Committee—which helped establish the position—confesses, "That's hard to say."

In fact, since Cambone's March 2003 confirmation by the Senate, he and Rumsfeld have spent far more energy explaining what the job *isn't*—that is, a rival to the director of central intelligence (DCI). The DCI is the titular head of the intelligence community, but he has budgetary and executive control over only the CIA, which he runs directly. The problem is that the CIA controls only about 12 percent of the estimated $40 billion intelligence budget, while Pentagon-based intelligence services represent about 85 percent. (The difference is made up by the smaller agencies.) Previously, the various Pentagon intelligence services didn't have a single official overseeing them. Now they do—Cambone. That change has prompted some to suggest the new undersecretary represents an alternative power center in the intelligence community. "What the creation of [Cambone's] office has done is to shift the intelligence community's center of gravity further into the Pentagon," says Aftergood.

Indeed, despite Cambone's and Rumsfeld's denials, Cambone probably wouldn't have been tapped for the position if Rumsfeld wasn't interested in wielding more control over the nation's intelligence policy. As one of Rumsfeld's closest aides and earliest hires, Cambone's various tasks have all had a single overarching goal, according to his current and former Pentagon colleagues: to ensure that Rumsfeld's will is properly carried out within the Pentagon bureaucracy.

The Pentagon's increasing assertiveness on intelligence matters is already cause for concern, as Abu Ghraib shows. But there's a broader issue beyond the scandal. The rise of a new intelligence czar at the Pentagon sets the stage for another round of bruising bureaucratic turf wars between the Department of Defense and the CIA—one with large implications for the war on terrorism—at a time when Langley, weakened by George Tenet's abrupt departure last week, is ill-prepared to do battle with Rumsfeld and his deputies.

In a rare interview, Cambone—a longtime defense wonk and veteran of George H. W. Bush's Pentagon—is emphatic that he's not a rival to the DCI. "I can't imagine that's true," he says. He describes his 120-member office as focused on "workaday and relatively unglamorous kinds of things." Its foremost responsibility, according to Cambone, is to ensure that military commanders have the intelligence they need, which in turn guarantees that "the other [intelligence] agencies are concentrating on the right things." (He declined to discuss Abu Ghraib.) Beyond focusing on immediate battlefield needs, Cambone makes sure the Pentagon civilian leadership also has the intelligence it requires. He emphasizes that his office does not itself perform either intelligence collection or analysis. But, in the event of disagreement between the intelligence agencies, Cambone will explore the roots of the dispute and "encourage the community to engage in those comparative analyses."

There has never been a senior Pentagon official with this much direct involvement in intelligence matters. Previously, the Pentagon's role in compiling the intelligence budget was spread out among officials from a variety of military intelligence services, all of which contributed to the budget request that the DCI's staff would compile. Now, Cambone's office provides a solitary mechanism to ensure that

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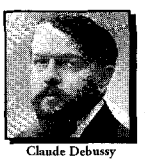
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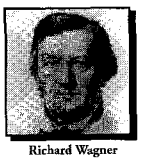
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the defense secretary's interests are reflected in the intelligence budget. He and the CIA's deputy director for community management sit down to hammer out budget priorities, a process Cambone describes as "highly collegial."

But others aren't so sure relations between the Pentagon and the CIA will remain so cordial. "By definition," says Aftergood, the creation of Cambone's position "means that there's going to be a lot more high-level intelligence policymaking going on at the Pentagon. That, in turn, means that U.S. intelligence will take on an increasingly military-oriented focus." Currently, military and civilian intelligence largely serve different roles: Most of the Pentagon's intelligence assets are tactical—geared toward specific, short-term military operations rather than, say, running an agent over decades. But that may change. For one thing, Cambone isn't the tactical sort. "He's very strategically focused," says Torie Clarke, a former Pentagon spokeswoman and another member of Rumsfeld's brain trust. For another, the office itself is designed to look at the big picture. According to Cambone, the undersecretary is responsible for identifying what intelligence capabilities the Pentagon will need ten years out and ensuring that the department will have them. And that focus is broad. "It could be anything from technical capability to the kinds of human intelligence we might need to the type of analytic base we're going to need," Cambone says.

While Cambone envisions this long-term planning as "a shared exchange of information" with the CIA, it's not hard to see how the Pentagon's needs could diverge from Langley's, setting the stage for confrontations over resources and control of intelligence assets. Take human intelligence, key to the war on terrorism. "DOD, from an intel standpoint, they still don't really have a good undercover humint [human intelligence] capability," says a retired CIA veteran. But the Pentagon might decide that its own human intelligence capabilities need bolstering in the coming years—something Cambone hints he's looking into—and, at a time when massive budget deficits threaten to restrict the supply of new funding, the CIA might not take increased Pentagon encroachment on its premier function lying down.

There are already some signs that the Pentagon is moving aggressively into what have been traditional CIA functions. It has reportedly opened a new intelligence training center near the Tacoma, Washington, home of the 1st Special Forces Group. Some officials have argued for greater Special Forces control over battle–space preparation activities—that is, the insertion of teams into enemy territory to establish safe areas and local intelligence assets in anticipation of larger military activity—which the CIA typically performs. "For too long, the shooters have left intel for the spooks to do," one such official told *The Washington Times* earlier this year. "Our philosophy is: Everybody's an intelligence agent." And, while the pairing of military teams and CIA agents has produced notable successes—such as the December capture of Saddam Hussein—some see friction in the relationship. According to a knowledgeable military consultant in Afghanistan, CIA and Special Forces operatives have been unable to come to terms over who exactly is in control. "It's part of the reason why you don't have [Osama] bin Laden in hand," says the consultant. "No one's in charge." Neither Cambone nor the Pentagon's directorate of Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict would comment on the relationship between Special Forces and intelligence work.

RUMSFELD HAS REPEATEDLY dismissed concerns that Cambone's office competes with the DCI. Such criticism, he said last week, "is made only by people who don't know what they are talking about." But exerting greater influence over intelligence policy has long been a Rumsfeld priority. At his January 2001 confirmation hearing, Rumsfeld emphasized the "importance of considerably improving our intelligence capabilities," and he hinted he didn't just mean military intelligence. In June 2002, the Pentagon's general counsel sent the Senate Armed Services Committee a letter requesting the establishment of a new intelligence office in the Pentagon, because, in the words of a Committee aide, "intelligence needs to be elevated to a higher importance than in the past, and [Rumsfeld] wants a single office to assist him in fulfilling the Defense intelligence responsibilities." The Pentagon assured the Committee, according to the aide, that "there would be no substantive change" in the Pentagon's relationship with the CIA.

The proposal got a critical push from Tenet. Tenet sent the committee a letter around the same time endorsing the new Pentagon office—thereby undercutting concerns that Rumsfeld was out to establish an alternative DCI. According to a former intelligence official, however, Tenet just didn't much care. "George's attitude all along has been that he wants to run the CIA and doesn't care about the rest [of the intelligence community]," the official says.

The very fact that Rumsfeld selected Cambone for this new position indicates how important the office is to the secretary of defense. On the merits, Cambone's selection was "unconventional," as former Army Secretary Tom White puts it, "seeing as [Cambone] had no previous experience in the intelligence community." Inside the Pentagon, however, Cambone has the most important credential of all: He's one of Rumsfeld's closest confidantes. After a stint as an analyst with the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Cambone served in the late '90s as staff director on two foreign policy commissions Rumsfeld chaired. Cambone's peers view him as a stand-in for his boss—Rumsfeld's enforcer, without an agenda of his own. "On a number of things, Steve is the sounding board," according to a senior Defense official. "He gets a sense of how the secretary may approach things, and he'll look at something, not to say, 'This is right and this is wrong,' but to say, 'The secretary may want this and this question answered that you maybe haven't thought about.' "

That closeness has led Rumsfeld to entrust Cambone with numerous tasks at the Pentagon. He spearheaded the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review on overhauling America's defense posture. He toiled on the early 2002 Nuclear Posture Review that flirted with the idea of nuking hidden

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WMD facilities. And he helmed the Program Analysis and Evaluation office, where he reviewed defense programs for their utility to Rumsfeld's vision of networked, high-tech warfare. "Follow Cambone's bouncing ball—where he went and what job he had—and you see very clearly what the secretary's agenda was," says a former Defense official who worked closely with Cambone.

CAMBONE'S LATEST BOUNCE may end up being his last. He was once discussed as a potential successor to Tenet, but Abu Ghraib surely makes that impossible. A report expected next month from a top Army intelligence officer, Major General George Fay, will examine the conduct of military intelligence at Abu Ghraib in greater detail, and, while Fay lacks the authority to investigate his civilian or military superiors, congressional officials say they will be reviewing Fay's findings for indications of high-level approval of the abuse, tacit or otherwise. "I wouldn't be surprised if we have [Cambone] back up" to testify, says the senior Senate Armed Services Committee staffer.

But it's not Cambone—nor even Rumsfeld—who makes the office of undersecretary of defense for intelligence problematic. The problem is the office itself. The position allows the Pentagon to assert ever more influence over the nation's intelligence priorities at a time when the CIA is ill-positioned to serve as a counterweight. Tenet—the second-longest serving DCI in history—is gone, taking with him the CIA's chief of covert operations, Jim Pavitt. The new interim DCI, John McLaughlin, is a soft-spoken guy without much of a reputation for interagency combat. This summer, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the 9/11 Commission are expected to level new attacks on the CIA's recent performance. And, already, *The Washington Post* has wondered on its front page whether McLaughlin can "preserve[e] the CIA's status at the White House and among world leaders." If Tenet's departure leaves a "power vacuum" in the intelligence community, as *The New York Times* put it, Cambone and Rumsfeld are well positioned to fill it.

The ascendancy of Cambone's intelligence office may also foreclose on the option—endorsed by the bipartisan Joint Congressional Inquiry into the September 11 attacks—of putting a single, independent figure atop the entire intelligence community with the ability to move resources and issue directives that bind all the nation's intelligence services. As former DCI Robert Gates wrote in the *Times* in early June, "In the real world of Washington bureaucratic ... politics, there is no way the secretary of defense ... [is] going to hand those agencies over to an intelligence czar." A national intelligence czar might stand a chance of policing the turf battles that have led the intelligence agencies to fight each other almost as much as they have Al Qaeda. But it looks like the secretary of defense has decided that, if there's going to be an intelligence czar, he'll pick up his mail at the Pentagon. ■

A dollar crash?

Euro Trashing

BY NIALL FERGUSON

"The convention whereby the dollar is given a transcendent value as an international currency no longer rests on its initial base. ... The fact that many states accept dollars ... in order to make up for the deficits of [the] American balance of payments has enabled the United States to be indebted to foreign countries free of charge. Indeed, what they owe those countries, they pay ... in dollars that they themselves can issue as they wish. ... This unilateral facility attributed to America has helped spread the idea that the dollar is an impartial, international [means] of exchange, whereas it is a means of credit appropriated to one state."

Thus spoke Charles de Gaulle in 1965, during a press conference often cited by historians as the beginning of the end of postwar international monetary stability. De Gaulle's argument was that the United States was deriving unfair economic advantages from possessing the principal international reserve currency. To be precise, it was financing its own balance-of-payments deficit by selling foreigners dollars that were likely to depreciate in value.

The striking thing about de Gaulle's analysis is how aptly it describes the role of the dollar in 2004. That is itself ironic, since the general's intention was, if possible, to topple the dollar from its position as the world's number-one currency. In this, he utterly failed. True, pressure on the dollar grew steadily in the wake of de Gaulle's remarks. By 1973, if not before, the system of more-or-less fixed exchange rates that had been devised at Bretton Woods in 1944 was dead; the world entered an era of floating exchange rates, not to mention high inflation. Yet, even in the darkest days of the '70s, the dollar did not come close to losing its status as a reserve currency—that is, the currency in which international finance and commerce is transacted. Indeed, so successfully has the dollar continued to perform this role that, in the course of the past decade, some economists have begun speaking of Bretton Woods II—a new system of more-or-less fixed exchange rates with the dollar, once again, as the key currency.

As de Gaulle understood, this state of affairs promises the United States real benefits. As long as the dollar is

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ascendant, the United States can continue to run huge trade and budget deficits without having to worry about serious economic fallout. But, if the dollar were to lose its status as the world's reserve currency, the economic consequences would be grave. Unfortunately for Americans, the sheer magnitude of the imbalances in America's financial position, along with the emergence of a suitable alternative to the dollar—the euro—now make this a real possibility.

THE EXISTENCE OF a dollar standard may come as something of a surprise to any American who has been considering a summer holiday in Europe. With the euro having appreciated to $1.20 (compared with around 85 cents two years ago), talk of a new era of fixed exchange rates centered around the dollar seems as far-fetched as the current asking price of a Tuscan villa. But "Son of Bretton Woods" is not a global system. It is primarily an Asian system. At the system's core, with their currencies firmly pegged to the dollar, are China, Hong Kong, and Malaysia. Also linked to the dollar, though less rigidly, are the currencies of India, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand.

Even more than it was in the '60s, this system is highly beneficial to the United States. Over the past decade or so, the U.S. current account deficit—the difference between all that the United States pays to the rest of the world for goods, services, and loans, and all that it earns from the rest of the world—has widened dramatically, to around 5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Add together the portion of federal debt held by foreigners and you arrive at a total external debt of almost $3 trillion. At the end of 2002, according to the Department of Commerce, the net international indebtedness of the United States was equivalent to around a quarter of GDP. This is all the more remarkable given that, as recently as 1988, the United States was still a net creditor.

This rapid role reversal—from the world's banker to the world's biggest debtor—has created two advantages for Americans. First, it has allowed U.S. businesses to invest substantially (notably in new information technology) without requiring Americans to reduce their consumption. Somewhere between 10 and 20 percent of all investment in the U.S. economy in the past decade has been financed out of the savings of foreigners, allowing Americans to spend, spend, spend—the personal savings rate is less than half what it was in the '80s—while, at the same time, reaping the benefits of increased productivity through improved technology.

The second payoff has taken the form of lavish tax cuts—or, more precisely, freedom from the consequences of the large deficits they create. The dramatic shift in the finances of the federal government from a surplus of $236 billion in 2000 to a deficit of more than $520 billion in 2004—a nearly unprecedented deterioration, according to the International Monetary Fund—has also been substantially funded from abroad. The reason is simply that foreigners are willing to buy the new bonds issued by the U.S. Treasury at remarkably high prices (which imply low rates of return, i.e., interest rates). In the past ten years, the share of the privately held federal debt in foreign hands has risen from 20 to 45 percent.

Had that not been the case, the combination of tax cuts, increased spending, and cyclically reduced revenue that has characterized President Bush's fiscal policy would have led to much more severe increases in long-term U.S. interest rates. Indeed, according to Paul Krugman, a sudden loss of appetite for dollars abroad could quickly send the ten-year bond rate to 7 percent and the 30-year mortgage rate to 8.5 percent. (When the demand for U.S. dollars dries up, Americans must offer higher interest rates to persuade foreigners to hold them.)

These developments would have devastating economic consequences. A 3 percent jump in long-term rates would whack both the federal government and American homeowners with considerable force. For, unlike big U.S. corporations, which increasingly use derivative contracts to reduce their exposure to interest-rate risk, neither the U.S. Treasury nor the average American household is even the slightest bit hedged. In the case of the government, higher rates would mean higher debt-service costs as Treasury bills mature and new debt is issued. In the absence of tax hikes, higher debt-service costs would mean bigger deficits, too. The U.S. government could pretty soon find itself in a vicious circle, in which higher interest rates lead to larger deficits and larger deficits lead to higher interest rates. Meanwhile, even as interest rates have begun nudging upward, the proportion of new U.S. mortgages that have adjustable rates, rather than fixed ones, has risen from around 12 percent in late 2002 to 32 percent. That means a substantial chunk of American homeowners would immediately feel the pain if rates rose more steeply.

To understand the macroeconomic consequences of such pain, bear in mind that, since the mid-'90s, the consumer has been the driving force behind U.S. economic growth: As a percentage of GDP, personal consumption rose from 67 percent in 1998 to 71 percent in 2003. Low interest rates have been central to this story, allowing Americans to keep consuming by taking on debt even while their incomes have been flat. Since 1990, American households have increased their indebtedness significantly, from around 84 percent of income to around 115 percent. A 3 percent increase in interest rates would discourage consumption by making it very expensive to take on additional debt. Worse, it could push up the percentage of disposable income devoted to servicing existing debt from 18 percent today to well over 20 percent. That would leave families with much less money to spend, which would further crimp consumption and slow the economy.

This grim scenario is dismissed as exceedingly remote by proponents of the new Bretton Woods system, who see no reason why the arrangement shouldn't have a rosy, boundless future. The Asians, the argument goes, will keep on buying dollars and U.S. Treasuries—first, because they desper-

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ately need to avoid a dollar slide and, second, because there is no theoretical limit on how much of their own currency they can print in order to make their dollar purchases.

There is some truth to both these points. The East Asian monetary authorities have, to date, been willing to buy mind-boggling quantities of dollars in order to sustain the system. Between January 2002 and December of last year, the Bank of Japan's foreign exchange reserves grew by $266 billion. Those of China, Hong Kong, and Malaysia rose by a combined $224 billion. Taiwan acquired more than $80 billion. Nearly all of these increases took the form of purchases of U.S. dollars and dollar-denominated bonds. In the first three months of this year alone, the Japanese bought another $142 billion.

The Asian central banks' motivation for doing so has nothing to do with the dollar's being a good investment. (It's not. The return on a ten-year U.S. Treasury a year ago was around 4 percent, but the dollar has declined relative to the Japanese currency by 9 percent in the same period.) Their motivation was to prevent their own currencies from appreciating relative to the dollar—because a weak dollar would hurt their exports to the mighty U.S. market. (When the dollar is weak, imported goods cost American consumers more money.) Were it not for these interventions, the dollar would certainly have depreciated relative to the Asian currencies, though probably not by quite as much as it has against the euro.

But, eventually, there must be a limit to the Asians' appetite for dollars. The East Asians can hardly be oblivious to the fact that American public and private indebtedness is on an unsustainable growth path. And they know full well that their economic future hinges on the growth of their own domestic demand, rather than continued reliance on exports to the United States. In a lecture in Washington in March, Harvard President Larry Summers—who combines a world-class economic mind with the experience of economic policy-making at the very top—argued that "the growth plans of others that rely on export-led growth will need to be adjusted in the years ahead," given that the over-leveraged American consumer could give out at any moment.

Moreover, the Chinese in particular know that there are real risks in a policy that involves so much money-creation for the sole purpose of buying dollars and dollar-denominated bonds. Expanding the money supply in this way is potentially inflationary; indeed, the monetary overheating that worried policymakers in Beijing earlier this year was at least partly due to the country's exchange-rate policy. If the Chinese want to avoid creating a bubble for themselves at home, they may have no choice but to let the yuan appreciate against the dollar.

The second problem with the current optimism is that international capital flows are much larger today than they were even ten years ago—meaning that a loss of confidence in the dollar would have much wider ramifications than it did in the late '60s, when attention focused on the gold convertibility of the dollar. Should Asian central banks even temporarily lose their appetite for dollars, interest rates could spike immediately, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of a falling dollar exchange rate and rising U.S. interest rates. The United States, then, would face a crisis not unlike the ones that afflicted the Mexican peso in 1994 or the Thai baht in 1997.

PERHAPS THE STRONGEST argument made by dollar bulls is that foreigners have no alternative to investing in the United States. America, as numerous Wall Street practitioners have told me over the past few months, is the place to be now that an economic recovery is underway. "Where else are they going to go?" one seasoned Wall Street banker asked me scornfully last month. "Europe?"

Actually, yes. Whatever one thinks about the European Union as a political entity, the currency it has spawned has what it takes to rival the dollar as an international reserve currency. One reason the dollar has retained its status as the world's favorite currency is the sheer scale of U.S. trade. Moreover, the prices of most commodities—from oil to gold—are habitually quoted in dollars. But, in terms of GDP, the Eurozone is now the world's second-largest economy, accounting for over 20 percent of global output in 2002, compared with 32 percent for the United States and 12 percent for Japan, the world's third-largest. And the list of countries eager to join the Eurozone is long; nearly all ten new members of the European Union wish to do so. Moreover, in these anti-American times, the idea of pricing oil in the European currency has an obvious appeal to producers like Venezuela, which has a hostile relationship with the Bush administration. Former Malaysian premier Mohammed Mahathir, a vehement critic of the United States, explicitly proposed the idea last year.

In fact, we're already seeing concrete evidence that the euro could supplant the dollar as the international currency of choice. Before the euro's creation in 1999, around 30 percent of total international bond issuance was in its predecessor currencies, compared with more than 50 percent for the dollar. In the past five years, the euro has accounted for 47 percent to the dollar's 44 percent. Perhaps all that is missing is a more expansive monetary policy by the European Central Bank (ECB)—something a growing chorus of European economists are calling for—that would make the Eurozone a more attractive market for foreign exporters. (On the other hand, it may be that the ECB's hawkish anti-inflation stance—and the Eurozone's current account surpluses—are part of the euro's appeal as a reserve currency.)

Is this just the old European fantasy of cutting America down to size? Not in the eyes of practitioners in the City of London, the world's biggest market for international transactions, who tend to be unbiased observers since the British have declined to adopt the euro. A few weeks ago, at a dinner held in London by one of the biggest U.S. banks for around 18 clients at other major City institutions, I posed

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the question: Who thought the euro could plausibly replace the dollar as the principal international reserve currency? No fewer than six said they believed it could—and were prepared to admit it before their American hosts.

One hundred years ago, the pound was the world's number-one currency. Yet, Britain's soaring indebtedness during and after World War I allowed the dollar to stake a claim first to equality and then to superiority. It's not exactly clear when the dollar usurped the pound (some say 1915, some say 1931). But, once it did, the turnaround was rapid.

Should that happen to the dollar today, the U.S. economy could face dire consequences. The inflation of the '70s, precipitated by (among other things) the depreciation of the U.S. dollar after the breakdown of Bretton Woods, led to the most stagnant period in postwar U.S. economic history. But the fact that the dollar remained the world's preferred reserve currency limited how far it could fall, and how high interest rates could subsequently rise and squeeze the U.S. economy. The recent emergence of the euro points to a different—and more painful—denouement when this dollar standard breaks up. Charles de Gaulle may yet have the last laugh. ■

Washington's new worldview.

Springtime for Realism

BY LAWRENCE F. KAPLAN

In Washington, being a member of a "coalition" or a "committee" is to a foreign policy wonk what being a supernumerary at the Metropolitan Opera is to a New York arts patron or a good seat at the Ivy is to a Hollywood mogul: an emblem of status. The only distinction being that opera extras and movie producers tend not to influence the world's sole superpower. An important committee does. The Committee to Defend America By Aiding the Allies, which battled isolationism before World War II; the Committee on the Present Danger, which argued for a harder line against the Soviets during the 1970s; the Committee for the Free World, which did the same in the 1980s—each has helped shape U.S. foreign policy. And, last year, the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq did as well. As its title suggests, the group, which featured a bipartisan roster of democratic idealists, including former Democratic Senator Bob Kerrey and current Republican Senator John McCain, promoted the moral case for war—that is, ending a tyranny and creating a democracy in its place. Its members met with White House officials, *The New York Times* profiled them, antiwar protesters besieged their headquarters, and *Vanity Fair* wrote about a Committee reception at which Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz delivered an impromptu pep talk. (Full disclosure: The Committee hosted the reception partly in my honor, and I spoke as well.)

The Committee no longer exists. It has long since vacated its Pennsylvania Avenue offices. Its website doesn't work. In its place, another group has emerged, one that captures Washington's new mood. The Coalition for a Realistic Foreign Policy has become the anti–Committee for the Liberation of Iraq. As Coalition member and author David Hendrickson explained at the group's "American Imperium" conference in April, the U.S. overthrow of Saddam Hussein "violated the basic legal principle placing the right and responsibility for the internal institutions of a given state in the people of that country." The Coalition, which was unveiled at the National Press Club last October, quickly attracted a bipartisan who's who of foreign policy experts, including former Democratic Senator Gary Hart; a campaign adviser to John Kerry, Charles Kupchan; and former Reagan aide Doug Bandow. All count themselves foreign policy "realists" who support a foreign policy grounded in narrowly conceived "vital interests" and loathe America's efforts to "impose" democracy around the world.

If America's democratic project in Iraq continues to disappoint, it won't be long before the Coalition's members find themselves meeting with White House officials. Indeed, it appears nearly everyone in Washington is a realist now. Neatly summarizing the revised wisdom, *The Washington Post*'s George Will recently argued that America's errors in Iraq flow not so much from the bungled implementation of the democratic idea as from the idea itself—"the Jeffersonian poetry of democratic universalism." The new realism, moreover, has already been enshrined in official policy. The Bush team still employs high-minded rhetoric about America's democratic mission abroad, but, in practice, it has reverted to a more humble focus. The Kerry campaign, too, has abandoned any pretense of democratic idealism. Strategic chokepoints, oil wells, alliances—these are the things that animate Kerry's "realistic" vision of the world. Which is too bad. Because, no matter what you think of Iraq, realism can't win the war on terrorism.

Today's premier realist, the University of Chicago's John Mearsheimer, explains the worldview this way: "Realists tend not to draw sharp distinctions between 'good' and 'bad' states, because all great powers act according to the same logic, regardless of their culture, political system, or who

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runs the government." Put bluntly, the character of regimes does not matter. Or, as one of the founding fathers of post–World War II realism, George Kennan—who denounced even "the assumption that state behavior is a fit subject for moral judgment"—put it, "No people can be the judge of another's domestic institutions and requirements." All this leads to a disdain for what Hans Morgenthau, another father of American realism, described as "the contemporary phenomenon of the moral crusade."

Although typically associated with hard-headed Republicans like former national security advisers Brent Scowcroft and Henry Kissinger, realism gained traction on the left in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, when many liberals decided the United States was marred by involvement in too many suspect conflicts and unfit to pass judgment on other political systems. With the end of the cold war, President Clinton repudiated this sentiment, as did 2000 Democratic nominee Al Gore, who insisted that, just as battling communism had been America's mission, today the nation's mission was to spread democracy around the world.

But, for John Kerry, pronouncements like these derive from a lethal mixture of naïveté, hubris, and chauvinism. Hence, when in 1997 Clinton repeated his administration's mantra that the United States had become the "indispensable nation," Kerry complained, "Why are we adopting such an arrogant, obnoxious tone?" As with nearly everything else, Kerry attributes his disdain for foreign policy "arrogance" to the lessons he learned in Southeast Asia. But, as my colleague Franklin Foer has pointed out ("Like Father," March 8), Kerry imbibed his realism even earlier in life, at the foot of his diplomat father. In a recent interview with *The Washington Post*, Kerry explained that his dad instructed him in the futility of tending "to see other people in the context of our history, our own hopes, our own aspirations."

The lesson appears to have stuck. In April, Kerry said the goal in the present war should be "a stable Iraq, not whether or not [Iraq] is a full democracy." When it comes to Egypt, Kerry said in a recent interview, democracy promotion would have to take a backseat to "general stability in the Middle East." In China, Saudi Arabia, Russia, and Pakistan, too, "Kerry indicated that as president he would play down the promotion of democracy," according to the *Post*. After all, Kerry said, in an echo of Jeane Kirkpatrick's famous argument that the United States shouldn't push too hard to democratize "friendly" dictatorships, "You have to put your priorities first." All this proved too much for Human Rights Watch Executive Director Kenneth Roth, who says, "What is most disturbing about the Kerry statements is the suggestion that a sophisticated security strategy need not be complemented by human rights values."

Kerry's advisers see little need for the complement, either. Members of the campaign claim that former U.N. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, who mocked George W. Bush's aspiration "to change the world" and his "sloppy neo-Wilsonianism" in a recent CNBC interview, has drained idealism from Kerry's foreign policy platform. In place of "neo-Wilsonianism"—a term the Clinton team once used to describe itself—former Clinton national security adviser and Kerry confidante Sandy Berger has coined a new motto for the presumptive Democratic nominee: "forward-looking realism." What this means in its particulars may be gleaned from Kerry's top foreign policy adviser, Rand Beers, who told the *Los Angeles Times* in April, "We have been concerned for some time that Bush's position about having some kind of democratic state [in Iraq] was too heroic." So, too, in the case of Iran, where, far from aiming for regime change, Beers says the United States must engage "the hardline element." Another of Kerry's foreign policy advisers, Gary Hart, makes the point more bluntly. Inveighing against Bush's pledge to mount "a massive democratic revolution throughout the Arab world," Hart, a founding member of the Coalition for a Realistic Foreign Policy, said last year, "The extravagance, not to say arrogance, of this epic undertaking is sufficiently breathtaking in its hubris to make Woodrow Wilson blush."

There are, to be sure, people in the Kerry orbit who acknowledge that democratization is a vital U.S. interest. Former Clinton Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Ronald Asmus, the Progressive Policy Institute's Will Marshall, and the Hoover Institution's Michael McFaul all boast long histories of democratic idealism and all have brainstormed ways for Kerry to address the subject. Yet, when approached by democracy and human rights advocates about having Kerry devote an address to the subject during his recent series of speeches on national security, the campaign declined. Asked to explain the lack of any references to the topic in Kerry's recent addresses, one adviser says, "He doesn't want to sound too 'soft,' and, my guess is, he doesn't feel passionately about it."

IRONICALLY, WHILE KERRY advisers blast the president's Wilsonianism, many administration officials regard Wilsonianism as last year's theme. True, the president himself still often channels Wilson. "Some who call themselves realists question whether the spread of democracy in the Middle East should be any concern of ours," Bush said in a speech last week. "But the realists, in this case, have lost contact with a fundamental reality. ... America is always more secure when freedom is on the march."

Trouble is, the very realists whom Bush decries are now running his foreign policy. The Pentagon's neoconservative democratizers have been losing influence for months now. The nadir came three weeks ago, when the National Security Council (NSC) signed off on a raid on the home of former Pentagon favorite Ahmed Chalabi—without informing the Pentagon beforehand. The neoconservatives' decline was already apparent last October, when, in an attempt to centralize Iraq policy at the NSC, Condoleezza Rice formed the Iraq Stabilization Group—again, without consulting the Pentagon. The official chosen to chair the group, Rice's boss in the first Bush administration, Robert

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Blackwill, has "reduced the Defense Department's influence to zero," says a senior administration official. Iraq czar L. Paul Bremer, who worked with Blackwill under Kissinger, now reports to his fellow realist at the White House rather than to the Pentagon. On the NSC itself, Blackwill, who shares the title of deputy national security adviser with Stephen Hadley, a Pentagon ally, "has sucked the air out of" his colleague, according to a White House official. As for the other locus of democratic idealism in the White House, the Valerie Plame investigation has consumed the vice president's foreign policy team. Meanwhile, Dick Cheney has been soliciting advice from Kissinger, and members of the Bush team claim that Rice, chastened by her prewar foray into the world of democracy promotion, has been doing the same from Scowcroft.

In Iraq, the results of this springtime for realism have been plain to see. Recent decrees revoking the independence of newspapers and reversing Bremer's earlier de-Baathification order may make a certain amount of short-term sense, but they hardly augur well for Iraq's democratic prospects. "The administration has largely given up on its own [former] priorities," says Amatzia Baram, an Iraq expert at the U.S. Institute of Peace, "going from a reluctance to rely on tribes, militias, and Baathists to accommodation with them." Most of all, Bremer and Blackwill favor the sort of technocrats with limited democratic credentials touted by U.N. envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, a man Blackwill has championed inside the White House as the solution to all that ails Iraq. Hence, last week, Bremer and Brahimi tried to install Sunni octogenarian Adnan Pachachi as Iraq's interim president. Alas, Iraqi politicians chose their own candidate.

Blackwill, along with Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, also has an influential hand in Iran policy. Gone from the administration's rhetoric is any talk of regime change in Tehran. Gone, too, in fact, is any mention of democracy there at all—apart, that is, from Armitage's insistence that Iran already qualifies as one. "The administration's realists are running Iran policy," says Ray Takeyh, an Iran expert at the National Defense University. "It's no longer regime change; it's détente." In Libya, as well, democracy has taken a backseat to the new realism. In exchange for Libya's renunciation of its WMD arsenal, Secretary of State Colin Powell now hails the brutal dictatorship as "an example to other nations"—this, despite his own State Department's assessment that Libya still employs "widespread use of torture and other degrading treatment [and] restricts freedoms of speech, assembly, press and expression." For his part, Bush has gone so far as to praise two autocrats, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, for their willingness to "recognize the importance of representative, democratic institutions." Demonstrating that "recognition," both boycotted this week's unveiling of Bush's initiative for democracy in the Arab world.

In fact, not even the much-hyped Greater Middle East Initiative upends Washington's decades-old bargain with the Arab world. Though Rice originally trumpeted it as the first step in transforming the Middle East, the administration quickly backpedaled in response to an outcry from Arab leaders. "Each nation has to find its own path and follow that path at its own speed," Powell hastened to point out. The watered-down initiative, according to Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, "will address a wide range of social, economic, and political issues, but it will do little of consequence to advance what is at the heart of the regional transformation that the United States says it wants—democratization." Instead, the program focuses on secondary issues—a literacy campaign, a "micro-finance" proposal—which have long been part of U.S. and European aid programs to the region.

THE GENESIS OF the new realism is, of course, America's problems creating democracy in Iraq. But today's problems in Iraq do not derive from failures of democracy. They derive from failures of security, which have made democracy difficult to achieve. Those failures owe to a well-chronicled fact—the United States lacks the troop levels required to provide security. It should be axiomatic that, as former Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) adviser and democracy expert Larry Diamond puts it, "you can't have a democratic state unless you have a state, and the fundamental, irreducible condition of a state is that it has a monopoly on the means of violence." In Iraq today, not even the U.S. Army, much less the interim government, possesses such a monopoly.

Nor is it clear that the Bush team's particular recipe for building a democratic Iraq amounted to much more than a cartoon version of democratization. "The distinction between liberation and democratization, which requires a strategy and instruments," says former U.S. Information Agency Director Penn Kemble, "was an idea never understood by the administration." Indeed, it was precisely the equation of the absence of oppression with the existence of democracy—exemplified by Donald Rumsfeld's infamous "freedom's untidy" comment during the postwar looting—that underpinned the White House's assumption that it could rapidly draw down U.S. forces after toppling Saddam. It took the United States years to transform Germany and Japan. In Iraq, by contrast, the CPA already has its bags packed.

Stepping into the vacuum created partly by the mistakes of the Pentagon and White House, realists now counsel that the quickest path to stability in Iraq lies in abandoning our democratic hopes for the country. Some, like Leslie Gelb of the Council on Foreign Relations, argue for partitioning the county into Kurd, Shia, and Sunni zones. Others argue for installing an autocrat. Still others, like Pat Buchanan, advocate withdrawing altogether.

Ultimately, however, democracy offers the best—perhaps the only—way to ensure stability. Now that Iraqis have been granted some degree of freedom, what Shia or Kurd will submit to a Baghdad strongman again? Only elections can confer the legitimacy a new Iraqi government will

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require. Argues Jennifer Windsor, a Middle East expert at Freedom House: "Democracy is the only political system that can balance competing attachments and interests in Iraq today, so it is the only hope for stability."

The lack of "realistic" alternatives to democracy in Iraq applies equally to the Middle East as a whole. Complaining that democratic idealists "incorporate Wilsonian ideas into their vision in urging the spread of democracy," prominent realist G. John Ikenberry of Georgetown University scoffs at the notion that this "is not merely idealism, according to them; it is good national security policy." Meanwhile, Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies argued in *The New York Times* last week, "What we need now is pragmatism and not ideology. ... We must do everything we can to help the region's more moderate and friendly regimes—the Saudis and others—to defeat terrorism and improve the protection of foreign workers and oil facilities." Likewise, Republican Senator Pat Roberts insists that Washington must restrain its tendency toward "social engineering where the United States feels it is both entitled and obligated to promote democracy."

But the United States *is* entitled—on September 11, the aim of a democratic Middle East became a matter of our national well-being, even survival. And the United States *is* obligated—because either pressure for democracy in the Arab world will come from the United States or it will come from nowhere at all. For the source of America's entitlement, look no further than the region's "friendly regimes." Not only has repression fueled terrorist movements in places like Saudi Arabia and Egypt; the very governments we prop up have sanctioned the worst elements as a way to deflect popular anger from their palace gates. The absence of civil society, the weakness of independent media outlets, the weakness of secular opposition parties—all these things underpin the truth that, as Bush said in a recent speech to the National Endowment for Democracy, "as long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish, it will remain a place of stagnation, resentment, and violence ready to export."

This is more than conjecture. A recent study by Princeton's Alan Krueger and Czech scholar Jitka Maleckova analyzed data on terrorist attacks and measured it against the characteristics of the terrorists' countries of origin. The study found that "the only variable that was consistently associated with the number of terrorists was the Freedom House index of political rights and civil liberties. Countries with more freedom were less likely to be the birthplace of international terrorists." Unfortunately, according to the U.N.'s Arab Human Development Report, not a single Arab state offers such freedoms. One could plausibly have argued before September 11 that this was none of America's business. But, on that day, the Arab world's predicament became our own—thrusting the United States into a war of ideas to which realism has no adequate response.

Nor will victory in this highly ideological war be accomplished by standing by while Arab states leisurely pursue their "own path" to democracy, as Powell puts it. When it comes to the Arab world, either the spur for democratization will come from without or it will not come any time soon. Realists like Republican Senator Chuck Hagel insist the solution to the lack of freedom in the Middle East cannot be that "we are going to go forth and impose democracy." If Hagel means to suggest we should not regularly resort to arms to do so, he has a point. Yet, the realist critique refuses to distinguish between war and democracy promotion. (In this, it takes its cue from the White House, whose revised case that it waged war for the explicit purpose of creating democracy—rather than to topple an aggressive tyrant and then implant a democratic political order—has created the impression that America cannot promote democratization by means other than force.) Yes, America will need to "impose" democracy in the Arab world, but it can also rely on peaceful tools, such as broadcasting, financial aid, diplomatic pressure, public support for regimes that pursue democracy, and public opprobrium for those who do not. If this amounts to an imposition on the sovereignty of dictatorial regimes, so be it.

The notion that we ought not impose what Cordesman derides as "our own political values"—that is, democracy—on others misses the fact that, as democracy scholar Joshua Muravchik has pointed out, if people do not want to be governed by consent, they can always vote for a tyrant. In fact, defining democracy as a universal rather than specifically American aspiration means the United States would not stop such an outcome. More compelling is the argument that some countries might not be ready for democracy. No one has espoused this view more vigorously than Powell, who, in his memoirs, dismisses the idea of a "desert democracy where people read the Federalist Papers along with the Koran." This line of reasoning mirrors the logic that American policymakers applied to other formerly undemocratic regions of the world. Joseph Grew, the State Department's chief Japan expert, cautioned President Truman that "the best we can hope for is a constitutional monarchy, experience having shown that democracy in Japan would never work." Awash in cultural relativism, his colleagues and successors made the same point about East Asia, Germany, and South America. Now that the tide of democracy has swept over these regions, they are making the same point about the one part of the world it has yet to touch.

To be sure, with Iraqis killing Americans every day, the temptation to yield to such pessimism may prove irresistible. But, when they advertise Iraq—like they advertised Vietnam before it—as the repudiation of a larger democratic war of ideas, the realists encourage a more pessimistic conclusion than circumstances justify. A policy can be measured by its successes, and it can be measured by its failures. When it comes to America's record in promoting democratic change, the former surely outweigh the latter. The world may not change easily, but, because of America, it *has* changed. Having come so far, and confronted with a new totalitarian threat, how "realistic" would it be to quit now? ■

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

In the Same World

WAR HAS CHANGED—for the better. This became clear during the Vietnam War when some Americans went to Hanoi and reported on conditions there while we were battling North Vietnam. The change heightened during the Gulf War when American television correspondents remained in Baghdad and reported on the American bombing of the city. Can anyone imagine American correspondents in Berlin in 1945 reporting on the Allied bombings?

CONTROL ROOM (Magnolia)

COFFEE AND CIGARETTES (UA)

This new journalism—call it bilateral—expands the reporting of a war from a more or less one-perspective account of the conflict to include a report on how the enemy is responding. The national temper of the wars has changed: the country certainly wasn't as unified against Vietnam, and isn't against Iraq, as it was against the Axis. Whichever came first, the decline of consistent national rage or bilateral reporting, the latter has certainly helped the change. In any case, though truth is still the first casualty in war—in the present instance, a casualty even before the war began—there seems nowadays to be more awareness of that possible casualty in media editors and correspondents.

A new documentary underscores this point. **CONTROL ROOM** was made by Jehabe Noujaim, a young Harvard-educated Egyptian-American. Excepting only what we see on television screens throughout, the film takes place in the offices and studios of Al Jazeera, the Arab network based in Qatar, which has an audience of forty million people. The film deals with the beginning of the current war in Iraq as it was seen by Arabs in several countries. The interviews with Al Jazeera personnel in *Control Room* are in English, so the first thing to note is that Noujaim intended the film for the Coalition.

This leads to the film's greatest surprise for at least one viewer. It told me nothing of significance that I didn't already know. Much of the commentary in this well-made picture is forthright and moving (samples below), and I would not have wanted to miss it, but the American press (some of it) and American television (some of it) have, in general substance, forestalled it.

We see the opening of the war. In fact we see President Bush warning Saddam Hussein and his sons to get out of Iraq within forty-eight hours. This is apparently a replay of a tape recorded at the time of the speech, and the studio man who is now making the voice-over translation of the speech into Arabic can't help laughing a bit. (No wonder one of Al Jazeera's young producers says later that this whole war is like an American movie.) The most composed and shrewd of the people interviewed, Samir Khader, a senior producer, comments on the war as if it were a self-serving maneuver cloaked in altruism. He has no iota of praise for Saddam, but, as do others, he keeps reminding us of how the war looks to the Arab world. Another producer converses with the one American in the picture, a well-meaning Marine information officer, and tackles the Marine about civilian deaths in the American bombings. The lieutenant replies that the U.S. is using smart bombs to kill as few people as possible: we could have used dirty bombs, which are much less expensive, if we were really ruthless. Can you believe that this answer doesn't satisfy the producer?

It is easy to point out gaps in Noujaim's account. (What, for instance, about the rebuilding that tries to go forward in Iraq?) But the prime importance of this film, I'd say, is that it is not an eye-opener. Of course this change in reporting, this bilateralism, has occurred so far only in wars where the U.S. was the overwhelming superior in force. I hope we will never have to learn whether it applies otherwise. Still, for those who are interested in wartime truth, this film reminds us that the casualty has been somewhat reduced.

The history of mankind has one constant paradox. At the same time that brutalities are festering somewhere on the globe, somewhere else artists are exploring the delicacy of the human spirit. Choose any artist in any art and examine what was happening elsewhere in the world while he or she was working.

Jim Jarmusch is not an artist who is likely to register deeply in history; still, his new film comes along at a time when it underscores the paradox. In fact, what Jarmusch is chiefly interested in is non-subscription, a distance from acceptances of any kind, political or aesthetic. Jarmusch first came to notice in 1984 with *Stranger Than Paradise*, which was marked by a kind of casual yet dexterous control, a cool and intelligent refusal of narrative convention. His career since then has advanced these qualities in some degree, though not always with equal success.

The latest Jarmusch is **COFFEE AND CIGARETTES**, which is reported to have been seventeen years in the making. This can mean only that he made the various bits of it over a span of seventeen years. The film is a series of scenes, skits, episodes, that show two or sometimes three people smoking and sipping and conversing, usually in grungy places and usually improvising—at least that's the intended impression.

Two elements keep us watching. First, many of the people in the scenes are familiar—Cate Blanchett, Tom Waits, Bill Murray, along with pop figures unknown to me. Second, Jarmusch so patently isn't interested in gripping us, in satisfying almost any one of our usual demands on a film, that his very insouciance earns a little admiration. (I kept

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thinking of John Cage's "composition" *4'33"*, in which the "performer" does nothing for that period, which is exactly why we pay some kind of attention.) The best way to watch this film is while sipping coffee in a café. Nicotine optional.

The sketch that has the best shape is the one with Alfred Molina and Steve Coogan in London, as each duels the other with his fame. Molina is charmingly easy, Coogan more of a cagey fencer. The episode has a wry point, which makes it differ from the others.

What lies ahead for Jarmusch? As he journeys on with his jettisoning of convention, will he, mimicking Cage, offer us in time a blank film called *Ninety Minutes*? ■

Paul Starr
The Return of the Nativist

WHO ARE WE?
THE CHALLENGES TO AMERICA'S NATIONAL IDENTITY
By Samuel P. Huntington
(Simon and Schuster, 428 pp., $27)

IF SAMUEL P. HUNTINGTON'S NEW book is right, the United States is at grave risk of cracking apart. The growing numbers and geographic concentration of Hispanics, Huntington worries, may divide America between two linguistic groups and two cultures; Mexican immigration in particular is leading to the "demographic *reconquista*" of the Southwest, and recent immigrants are generally less willing than their predecessors to become American citizens and patriots. Advocates of multiculturalism and diversity, moreover, are undercutting national identity and loyalty. Both cosmopolitan-minded liberal intellectuals and globally oriented business leaders fail to put our national interests first and instead want to "merge" America with the world.

But, unlike America's "denationalized" elites, the American public is patriotic. The people want to preserve English as America's single language. They oppose high levels of immigration and special privileges for minorities. They prefer protectionist trade policies. As in the past, they are deeply religious, and the more religious people are, the more patriotic they tend to be. The United States confronts a choice, and in Huntington's view the right course is a renewed recognition of America as a Christian society, the repudiation of cosmopolitan and transnational tendencies, and a reassertion of unabashedly Anglo-Protestant culture as the "core" of American national identity.

Sentiments of this sort would be unsurprising on talk radio. It is startling, however, to find them in an erudite book by one of America's leading political scientists. This book is not an intemperate rant. As an analysis of the problem of national identity and contemporary social and political trends, *Who Are We?* is always interesting and often insightful. But it is also distorted in its judgments, exaggerated in its fears, and disingenuous about its intentions. It is the work of a serious man gone seriously wrong.

Huntington's central theme is that Anglo-Protestant culture is the "core" of American national identity. The rhetorical strategy here is ingenious. He prepares the ground by attacking as "half-truths" the ideas that the United States is a "nation of immigrants" and that American identity is "defined solely by a set of political principles, the American Creed." Huntington's objection to the first is that the original colonists were not immigrants but settlers—a quibble, you might suppose, but Huntington wants to argue that the settlers, not the later immigrants, defined what America has always been and remains today. And against the civic or "creedal" conception of American identity, Huntington invokes critics who point to the long history of exclusion of racial minorities from full citizenship. Then, as if he had proved immigration and civic ideals to be of secondary im-

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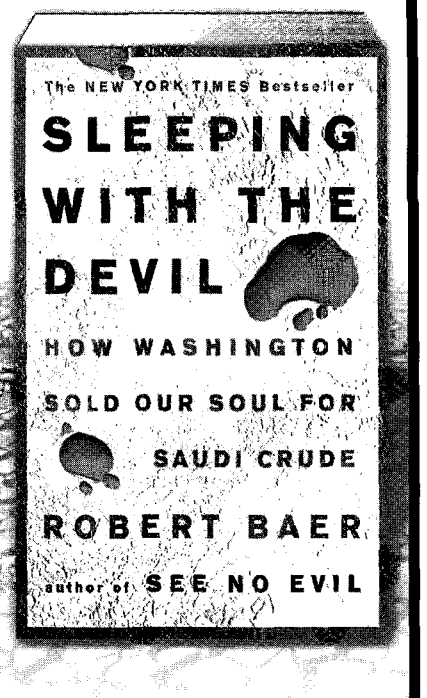
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SLEEPING WITH THE DEVIL
HOW WASHINGTON SOLD OUR SOUL FOR SAUDI CRUDE
ROBERT BAER
author of SEE NO EVIL

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portance, he claims that Anglo-Protestant culture is the "paramount defining element of American identity."

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT Anglo-Protestant culture is the essence of what it means to be American? "One has only to ask: Would America be the America it is today if in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it had been settled not by British Protestants but by French, Spanish, or Portuguese Catholics?" Huntington writes. "The answer is no." And Huntington is right: early settlers were unquestionably critical in shaping American culture and institutions. But, of course, neither would "America be the America it is today" if no one but British Protestants had ever come to our shores.

The difficulty here is fundamental. It begins with Huntington's portrayal of colonial settlement as almost entirely homogeneous. Although he cites the late John Higham on the emergence of the term "immigrant" (an American coinage of the 1780s), Huntington misses Higham's larger argument about the early formation of American nationality. As a result of a parliamentary decision in 1740, Britain had allowed foreigners not only to enter but also to naturalize in the American colonies, whereas the French and the Spanish permitted no other settlers in their dominions but native-born Catholics. America's "charter group," Higham writes, did not consist only of English settlers: "the First Immigration engendered a universalistic and eclectic ideal of nationality" that "set the United States on a course leading away from the English presumption that all groups should retain their own cultural distinctiveness." From the very start, in other words, the United States opened itself to diverse influences.

But all this is lost in Huntington's one-sided emphasis on the Anglo-Protestant role in defining America. In his telling, Protestantism has been the source of American values and the motor of American history. We get the old version of colonial history that puts the Puritans at the foundation, even though (as Jack Greene has shown) the colonies were predominantly commercial in orientation, and Massachusetts, with its religious leadership, was more the exception than the rule. Huntington similarly puts religion at the center of the impulse behind the American Revolution and the nation's founding, minimizing the influence of Enlightenment ideas and explaining away the absence of any reference to a deity in what Christian critics called our "Godless" Constitution. Huntington's account of religious influence in the early republic is particularly distorted. As Gaines Foster's recent book *Moral Reconstruction* demonstrates, Christian groups were unable in the early nineteenth century even to get post offices closed on Sundays. The Founders, Foster observes, "created a thoroughly secular national government, which left the regulation of morals to the states." You would never know this from Huntington's account.

THOSE WHO ARE FAMILIAR with Huntington's older work will be struck by his new view of America's founding principles. He quotes one scholar, unidentified in the text, as writing mistakenly that "the political ideas of the American Creed have been the basis of national identity." Most readers will have to check the endnotes to learn that these words come from Huntington himself, in a book that he published in 1981. He now believes that "America with only the Creed as a basis for unity could soon evolve into a loose confederation of ethnic, racial, cultural, and political groups, with little or nothing in common apart from their location in the territory of what had been the United States of America." Or, as he puts it at another point, "A creed alone does not a nation make."

I am not persuaded that America's civic ideals are too weak a basis to sustain American identity and patriotism, but Americans in any event do share a national culture. That culture, though, is not the inert tradition, fixed at America's birth, that Huntington sees as the sole possibility for the basis of national identity. The national culture has continually evolved, incorporating new elements from the country's changing experience, new waves of immigrants, and groups previously excluded from full participation, notably African Americans. It is striking that Huntington's book, despite its concern with culture, has virtually nothing to say about music, literature, television, film—nothing about the living culture that expresses and defines much of our experience and provides so many of the symbols, stories, models of character, and other understandings that Americans hold in common.

This obliviousness to the contemporary active life of our culture fits Huntington's effort to show that America's cultural "core" is its Anglo-Protestant heritage. It is not merely that he wants a renewed dedication to values such as individualism and the work ethic that he attributes entirely to Protestantism. He wants Christianity itself recognized as central to American identity. He writes that "America was created as a Protestant society just as and for some of the same reasons Pakistan and Israel were created as Muslim and Jewish societies in the twentieth century." This is not just a historical argument, for he later says (after admitting Catholics to the core) that "non-Christians may legitimately see themselves as strangers [in the United States] because they or their ancestors moved to this 'strange land' founded and peopled by Christians, even as Christians become strangers by moving to Israel, India, Thailand, or Morocco." And again: "non-Christian faiths have little alternative but to recognize and accept America as a Christian society."

The idea that Christianity is to the United States as Judaism is to Israel ignores, of course, that ours is not a Christian state, while Israel is officially a Jewish one. But to Huntington the distinction is evidently of such negligible importance that the analogy stands; he quotes Irving Kristol to the effect that although Christianity is not officially established, "it is established informally, nevertheless." And non-Christians had better accept it, lest they fracture the national unity that a shared religion supposedly gives a country. Witness Israel. Witness Pakistan.

This is not the only instance in which Huntington mistakenly sees national unity as rooted in a kind of cultural homogeneity. His attack on the whole panoply of policies aimed at encouraging greater social inclusiveness—such as affirmative action and changes in school curricula to reflect the contributions of African Americans and other minorities—is based on the premise that these policies undermine national identity and loyalty. But social and cultural exclusion is far more likely to have that effect. In the recent University of Michigan affirmative-action case, the Supreme Court received amici briefs from a variety of groups, including military officers, saying that affirmative action was necessary to make their institutions work because without it their leadership would not enjoy legitimacy. Diversity, these officers were saying, strengthens patriotism.

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More inclusive definitions of what it means to be American are part of that same effort to maintain national unity, although Huntington doesn't get it. Multiculturalism, he writes, is "basically an anti-Western ideology" promoted by liberals, who are no doubt the same people who foolishly believe that the American Creed of liberty and equality is a sufficient basis of American identity.

HUNTINGTON SEES THE GREATEST peril to the republic from the rise of Hispanics, particularly Mexican-Americans. No previous immigrant group, he warns, has had a historic claim to part of the United States. No other immigrants have been concentrated in areas contiguous to their homeland. The Mexicans, he argues, are poorly educated, fail to become citizens, develop ethnic enclaves apart from the rest of society, and try to maintain their own culture through bilingual education rather than assimilate.

At the end of his chapter on Mexican-Americans, Huntington quotes a Hispanic writer who tells aspiring Hispanic entrepreneurs that the "Americano dream ... is there for all of us to share." But Huntington is emphatic: "There is no Americano dream. There is only the American dream created by an Anglo-Protestant society. Mexican-Americans will share in that dream and in that society only if they dream in English." Huntington doesn't say exactly what he would do about all this, but he observes that "the most powerful stimulus to white nativism ... is likely to be the threat to their language, culture, and power that whites see coming from the expanding demographic, social, economic, and political roles of Hispanics in American society."

Huntington is very concerned about the reputation of nativism. He wishes to rescue it from misunderstanding. "The term 'nativism,'" he writes, "has acquired pejorative connotations among denationalized elites on the assumption that it is wrong vigorously to defend one's 'native' culture and identity and to maintain their purity against foreign influences." Of course, where American culture is concerned, "purity" is an exceedingly odd concept. Exactly who and what are pure?

Huntington claims that he is using "nativism" in only a "neutral" sense, to mean "intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e., 'un-American') connections" (here he is quoting Higham). He insists that "white nativism of this sort should not be confused with extremist fringe groups" such as the Ku Klux Klan. And he asks: "If blacks and Hispanics organize and lobby for special government-sponsored privileges, why not whites? If the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and La Raza are legitimate organizations, why not a national organization to promote white interests?"

Although much of this discussion seems clearly to welcome a nativist movement as legitimate, it is phrased to preserve deniability, and it perfectly epitomizes Huntington's disingenuousness. While doing his best to make nativism appear legitimate, he does not endorse it. He merely conjures it up as a possibility, as if to warn our "denationalized" elites about the dangers of continuing to support "special privileges" for minorities. Huntington's populist posturing about global business has the same disingenuous feel. If he genuinely believes that global companies are guilty of betraying America, what does he propose to do about it? He doesn't say.

None of these conjured perils is terribly persuasive. White nativism is a dog that has hardly barked in recent American politics, and at present it has no political home. The major political parties are too interested in competing for the Latino vote to give vent to nativist sentiment. Similarly, the specter of a Hispanic secession is a phantom of Huntington's imagining; there is no evidence of any such movement. Neither do Hispanics pose any genuine threat to the English language. The economic incentives in the United States to learn English are overwhelming—and they work. Even the data Huntington cites don't support his fears: 90 percent of Hispanics born in the United States are fluent in English. They are following the same pattern of linguistic assimilation that earlier immigrants followed.

IS AMERICA IN DANGER OF FALLING apart? I don't see the signs. The response to September 11 suggests that American nationalism is alive and kicking. And America's cultural integrity is scarcely in jeopardy. From one end of the country to the other, Americans shop at the same stores, listen to the same music, follow the same sports, read about and watch the same celebrities—and largely honor the same ideals. The

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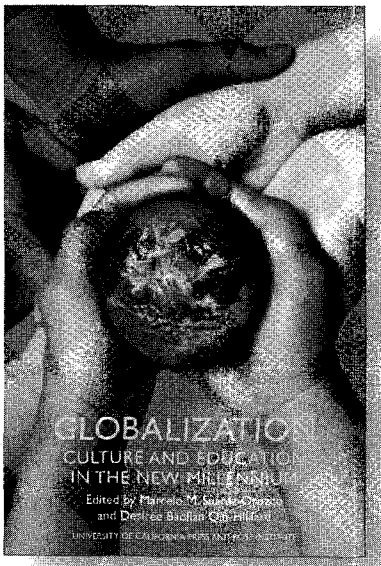

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efforts to bolster group identity that Huntington fears will wreck the country have been only weak countercurrents against the overwhelming tidal force of cultural integration.

There is a legitimate case to be made, however, for a deepened sense of common citizenship in America. If we want Americans to vote and to participate in civic life, citizenship has to matter for them. Huntington is entirely right when he observes that "those who deny meaning to American citizenship also deny meaning to the cultural and political community that has been America." But he is wrong, repugnantly wrong, about how to strengthen that community, and wrong also to suggest that those who disagree with him about the means of doing so are betraying the country.

In the book's foreword, Huntington remarks that *Who Are We?* has been shaped by his identities as a scholar and a patriot. But he has put distorted scholarship at the service of a misconceived patriotism. The idea of building American identity around an Anglo-Protestant revival would be entirely self-defeating. Far from unifying Americans, Huntington's vision of America as a re-energized Christian society would be deeply divisive. Samuel Huntington's nightmare of an American crackup could come true, but only if more people think as he does. ■

Enrique Krauze

Identity Fanaticism

In defense of Mexican-Americans.

AFTER HAVING PREDICTED the attack of the external enemy, the prophet Samuel Huntington has been hearing voices and believes he has discovered the enemy within. It is the Mexicans, who, like the Christians in medieval Spain, are bent on "reconquest." Since the 1990s, he claims in his new book, *Who Are We?: The Challenges to America's National Identity*, they have been "establishing beachheads" all over American territory, especially in the lands that belonged to Mexico before the war of 1847. This invasion—seemingly premeditated—constitutes, in Huntington's view, the greatest current "challenge to existing cultural, political, legal, commercial, and education systems," and to the "historical, cultural, and linguistic identity," and even to the territorial integrity, of the United States. Although Huntington claims to use the word "challenge" to mean a dilemma rather than a danger, his sense of national emergency is clear: he proclaims nothing less than "the end of the America we have known for more than three centuries." And his conclusion is every bit a call to action: "Americans should not let that change happen unless they are convinced that this new nation would be a better one."

There are many reasons to be concerned about the problem of Mexican migration to the United States. For Mexico, it is a national embarrassment. Like the Irish in the nineteenth century, most of the Mexicans who emigrate do so because they have no other way of making a better life, or even a viable life, for themselves and their families. Yet their ordeal is not the result of famine or drought, much less a lack of individual initiative. What drives them away is the Mexican government's inability to establish the basic conditions (infrastructure, rule of law, public institutions) under which they might thrive. These migrants are the final proof of the failure of the political system controlled by the PRI (Mexico's ruling party from 1929 until 2000)—the corrupt, inefficient, and authoritarian system that Huntington praised in 1968 in his book *Political Order in Changing Societies*. The families of the Mexicans who live permanently or temporarily in the United States may receive more than $13 billion annually from their relatives, but the migrants (especially the illegal ones) run mortal risks and sometimes live in a state of constant anxiety and distress.

For the United States, Mexican migration brings not only significant economic benefits (which Huntington hardly examines or mentions) but also social costs—in the educational system, in health services—that are impossible to ignore. At least four of the five factors that Huntington sees as distinguishing this migration from others in the past are real: first, the contiguity of our abysmally unequal countries; second, the scale of the phenomenon; third, the unprecedented condition of illegality in which 4.8 million of the migrants (69 percent of the Mexican-born population living in the United States) live. Fourth, and most disturbing to him, is the persistence of the problem: "unless there is a great war or a recession, the trend will continue ... without showing signs of stabilization." But the fifth factor is another matter. The regional concentration in the Southwest tends to be less marked than Huntington claims: there are Mexicans living across the length and the breadth of the United States, in small cities and even in Alaska, and their presence grows by annual rates much higher than 1,000 percent in Alabama, Tennessee, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Arkansas. Whatever the case, in quantitative terms the problem is a complex one, something that both countries must address. The trend will persist as long as there is a demand for work, but there is no doubt that the greatest duty of all—to retain the allegiance, and even the enthusiasm, of its own people—lies with Mexico.

Huntington stresses the qualitative aspects of the problem rather than the quantitative ones. If Mexican migrants and those who share the same supposedly unmovable identity, the Mexican-Americans, came from the true American mold as Huntington defines it—if they were homogeneous with what he regards as the essence of American culture—he would presumably be delighted. Huntington has a way of merging the Mexican emigrants with the Mexican-Americans, two groups that are in fact very different from each other, and also encompass many inner distinctions. Coming from Puebla is different from coming from Zacatecas, although both states are part of Mexico. This conflation of intra-Mexican differences is consistent with Huntington's crude civilizational approach.

Even a minimally objective and dispassionate look at the real world is enough to reveal that Huntington's

Enrique Krauze is the editor of LETRAS LIBRES. *This essay was translated from the Spanish by Natasha Wimmer.*

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alarm about the enemy within is not only unjust but also false. Latin America, with its roots in Spain and Portugal, is just as much an heir of Western civilization (Greek, Latin, Judeo-Christian) as the United States. The same is true of Mexico, of course; it is "an eccentric outpost of the West," as Octavio Paz wrote. The eccentricity to which Paz refers may be traced back to the rich indigenous history that Mexico shares with countries such as Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia, but in all these cases the pre-Hispanic cultures mingled with the Spanish (especially in Mexico) and the predominance of Christianity was almost total. In Mexico, moreover, the separation of church and state and the establishment of full civil liberties were firmly in place since the middle of the nineteenth century.

Huntington scorns these fundamental manifestations of Western character in Latin America. He prefers to see the region as a different civilization, and a lesser one. Aside from this misconception, it is strange that in the early 1990s he made statements in support of NAFTA that he now seems to have forgotten or dismissed. In *The Clash of Civilizations*, which appeared in 1996, he wrote that "Mexico has attempted to redefine itself from a Latin American to a North American identity and Chile and other states would follow." In Chile, these predictions were fulfilled—not for reasons of a modified "identity" but as the result of economic and political responsibility—and the same thing has happened in several Central American countries that twenty years ago found themselves tempted by Marxism and engulfed in civil war. But nothing seems enough. This economic convergence, and the encouraging fact that almost all of Latin America has adopted democratic systems of government, does not particularly move Huntington. He has come to doubt his own prophecies.

Huntington fears the silent invasion of America by the country next door, but he is ignorant of its history. "Mexicans and Mexican-Americans," he states, "can claim, and in fact do claim, historic rights to American territory." The obvious question is: who made this claim, and when? No serious (or unserious) figure of the twentieth century, political or intellectual—at least none that I know of—ever proposed something so absurd. Not even Venustiano Carranza, the most nationalist of Mexican presidents, let himself be seduced in 1916 by the famous Zimmerman telegram in which Germany promised restitution of lands that had once been Mexican. Indeed, during the first decades of the century, the prevailing sentiment was nearer the reverse: a Mexican fear—not unfounded, at least until 1927, when President Coolidge was a step away from declaring war on "Soviet Mexico"—of a new invasion by the United States.

Huntington maintains that Mexicans "haven't forgotten" the war of 1847, and warns that our plan is to turn California into "Mexifornia" or the "Northern Republic" (as one of the professors whom Huntington for some reason presents as an authority "predicts" for the apocalyptic year 2080). Here the important distinction has to do with memory. Mexican textbooks certainly record the events of that ill-fated war, and every year there is an official act of remembrance—a frozen civic liturgy, really—that commemorates the sacrifice of the "Boy Heroes" of Chapultepec, six young military school cadets who "died for their country" facing the invading army. We all know that the Mexican War was a deliberately provoked and unjust war, condemned at the time by Lincoln and Thoreau, and regretted even by Ulysses S. Grant, who took part in it. Still, the memory of this war is hardly an open wound. It is more like a disappearing scar: it took place more than a century and a half ago; it affected an almost depopulated region; and it did not result in massive expulsions or policies of segregation, let alone in acts of extermination (as with the later Indian wars).

BASING HIS JUDGMENT ON ANECdotal evidence (the booing of the American team at a soccer game in Los Angeles) and the sentimental or rhetorical declarations of Mexican politicians (intended for their constituencies in Mexico), without offering a single serious or reliable example, Huntington feeds the false notion that Mexicans harbor a historic grievance against the United States—for which the migrants, moved by some kind of blind collective subconscious, are now exacting payment. It all looks like Manifest Destiny revisited and reversed.

But it is simply not true. Anti-Americanism, at least of the raging kind

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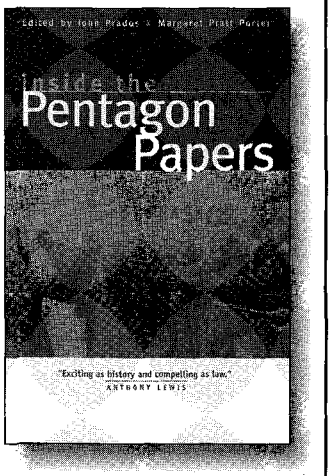

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that is so common around the world today, is far from being a popular sentiment in Mexico. Despite the vast unpopularity of the war in Iraq, there is no anti-Yankee graffiti on the walls in Mexico, there are no massive protests. Young people of the middle class, and even the lower classes, in Mexico's big and little cities may not "love" the Americans (what nation really "loves" another, especially in soccer stadiums?), but they should be judged by their actions. They participate in American popular culture; they learn English from pop music, the Internet, and the movies. We even have a phrase, "*la primera generación de estadounidenses nacidos en México,*" famously coined by Carlos Monsiváis, which describes them as "the first generation of gringos born in Mexico."

The migrants who, as the popular expression has it, head for "the other side" (and not, by the way, to a "land of infidels") are very similar in sociological profile to these other Mexicans, so far as the scholar Wayne Cornelius, director of the Center for Comparative Immigration Studies at the University of California, La Jolla, has been able to determine after thousands of ethnographic studies and almost thirty years of field investigations in communities with a high rate of migration. "They are hardly 'contemptuous' of American culture," he writes. "Young Mexicans today are all too willing to shed their cultural traditions and embrace U.S. values, such as consumerism." Though they come across the desert rather than through Ellis Island, their American dream is no different from that of the Irish, Poles, Germans, Scandinavians, Jews, or Italians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the "uprooted" peoples studied so unforgettably by Oscar Handlin, a Harvard professor who managed to achieve a sensitive understanding of the hard lives of migrants. They, too, preserved their ties with their original or spiritual homeland for generations. They were not the founders of the United States, but they built it.

The Mexican case is different—Huntington reasons—because those five quantitative factors will strengthen Mexican culture at the expense of the cultural and religious mores of Protestant Anglo-Saxon culture. When addressing cultural issues, it should be noted that Huntington slips back and forth between the terms "Mexican" and "Hispanic" as if they were equivalent, which they are not. In any case, one of the aspects that worries him most is the Mexicans'—and, by extension, the Mexican-Americans' and the Hispanics'—alleged lack of identification with the work ethic. That ethic is famously rooted in Protestant individualism, and it is, in Huntington's view, the very core of American identity. Huntington's strange and rather insulting notion seems to be based on mere opinions: a paragraph by Carlos Fuentes on the Protestant and Catholic dichotomy (which in his opinion is notable for its "Tocquevillean eloquence"); the clichés of the Mexican philosopher Armando Cíntora, who sees expressions such as "*Ahí se va*" ("Who cares?"), "*Mañana se lo tengo*" ("I'll have it for you tomorrow"), and "*El valemadrismo*" ("Nothing is really worthwhile") at the core of Mexican identity; or the ideas of Lionel Sosa, a successful businessman for whom "the lack of initiative, independence, and ambition" are constitutional in Mexicans (from whom he is descended).

HUNTINGTON COULD HAVE collected many other similar opinions, but the truth lies elsewhere. For one thing—this will surely surprise Huntington—Protestantism has made impressive advances in Mexico. In Mexico's southeastern states, and mainly in Chiapas, a state with a large indigenous population, 30 percent of the inhabitants are Protestant. In industrious Monterrey, there are hundreds of Protestant churches. Today Mexico is 90 percent Catholic, but if the trend continues the Catholic population will shrink to 75 percent in less than 30 years. For another thing, even if Mexican migrants aren't Protestants, they work as if they were.

In fact, work is all they do and all they think about. Pete Hamill—who may be suspect in this connection because of his Irish ancestry—has observed that "New York needed them desperately to recover its work ethic. You saw them everywhere: working in construction, pedaling bicycles to deliver pizza in the middle of a snow storm, you saw them in grocery stores, making food in some Korean deli, cleaning apartments, watching babies in the park, collecting garbage at night. There were eighty Mexican workers in the World Trade Center when it collapsed." There are many positive testimonies to the industriousness of Mexican migrants (in Huntington's book not a single one appears); but it is the statistics that are crucial. Besides their great numbers—one of every four foreign-born workers in the United States is Mexican—the first surprising thing is the variety of jobs that these workers hold: production, transportation, and material moving occupations (29 percent); construction, extraction, and maintenance (18.9 percent); farming, fishing, and forestry (6.5 percent); sales and office work (12.3 percent); service (25.3 percent); management, professional, and related occupations (8 percent). So this group is distinguished, rather, by a readiness to do any kind of work anywhere (even in cold climates, alien to Mexico). And hard work, too: migrants born in Mexico represent 3.4 percent of the employed labor force (130 million people), but the employed foreign force from Mexico had a higher representation in five industries: agricultural, forestry, fishing, and hunting (13 percent); construction (7 percent); accommodation and food (7 percent); manufacturing (5.2 percent); and wholesale trade (4.5 percent).

In this context, it is hardly surprising that the migrant is unable to devote much time to education. This condition also affects the second and third generations, and Huntington notes that "little progress has been made in the education and assimilation of Mexican-Americans." The problem is real, but it has nothing to do with a supposed Mexican disdain for education. The manifest desire of any Mexican parent is for his or her "children to be educated." And in fact the educational level of those who emigrate is higher than the national average in Mexico. True, a high percentage of Mexican immigrants have low levels of formal education, but they work in areas where skills and technical knowledge are learned on the job, not in schools. Huntington implies rather nastily that the only worthy work ethic is entrepreneurial, but there are already many instances of successful Mexican entrepreneurs in the United States to prove that the Mexican immigrants have nothing "structural" in their culture that impedes them.

In any case, all of them have emigrated so as to work, in order that their descendants can go to college or open small businesses of their own, which is also a generalized desire of any Mexican. It would be interesting to learn how many generations had to pass before a descendant of Ebenezer Huntington and Elizabeth Strong, who were married in 1806, became a Harvard professor. It would be interesting to know what kind

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of work his ancestors did. Huntington rightfully admires iron-willed American individualism, but he does not possess the vision or the understanding to recognize the bravery involved in the harsh personal adventures of the migrants. They might not be Protestant, but in a deep sense they are individualists who leave behind family and customs, and courageously uproot themselves, in order to make a better life for themselves—and today, not *mañana*.

HUNTINGTON'S GREATEST CONCERN is the undermining of the English language. If the problem is the ability to speak it, the statistics produced in 2000 for the Migration Policy Institute, based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, should reassure him. Of persons of Mexican origin, 45.5 percent speak it "very well," and 21 percent speak it "well." If the problem is the readiness to learn it, his own book contains encouraging information: "a 1998 national poll showed 66 percent of Hispanics wanting their children to learn English as soon as possible, even if it means they fall behind in other subjects"; "Hispanic parents surveyed in Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York said that teaching their children English is by far the most important thing that schools do"; "in one 1997 poll in Orange County, 83 percent of Hispanic parents 'said they wanted their children to be taught English as soon as they started school.' " Huntington admits that "the evidence on English acquisition and Spanish retention among immigrants is limited and ambiguous," which means that his argument often remains at the level of conjecture.

And when he discovers that the numbers do not support his theory (as when he notes that in 1990 "over 90 percent of U.S. born people of Mexican origin spoke English fluently"), the grim nativist prophet slides into suppositions that support his fears. "One might suppose"—he then notes—"that with the rapid expansion of the Mexican immigrant community, people of Mexican origin would have less incentive to become fluent in and to use English in 2000 than they had in 1970." It is on the basis of this "one might suppose" that he builds his case: "if the second generation does not reject Spanish outright, the third generation is also likely to be bilingual, and fluency in both languages is likely to become institutionalized in the Mexican-American community." And finally Huntington adds that "Spanish retention is also bolstered by the overwhelming majorities of Mexican immigrants." But it is important to note that he has not presented any evidence to support his ideas, he has presented only suppositions. In contrast, studies by Alejandro Portes and Ruben Rumbaut—they are cited by Cornelius—show that the command of Spanish wanes rapidly in second-generation Latin Americans born in the United States and practically vanishes in the third generation, including in students of Mexican origin. Is this loss truly a gain for the United States? Once English (whose power in the globalized world Huntington strangely underestimates) is learned, it is not clear why Hispanics should give up Spanish; it is spoken by nearly four hundred million people who constitute a vast business opportunity. And they do, after all, have a tradition worthy of transmission and respect. Linguistic ability is not a zero-sum game.

HUNTINGTON GOES TO THE extreme of maintaining that the "cultural divide" between Hispanics and Anglos could take the place of the racial divide between blacks and whites as "the most serious divide in American society." The comparison is not, I think, coincidental. In Huntington's book there are echoes of the racist anthropologies of the late nineteenth century, here disguised as culture-based studies. Bringing them back is not only bad politics, it is also an expression of ignorance, especially in the United States, whose greatest contribution to Western civilization (at least since the Civil War) has less to do with its Anglo-Protestant "core identity" than with its extraordinary capacity to creatively absorb peoples, cultures, and "identities" from all over the planet in a civic contract of freedom, respect for the law, and tolerance. Only on the basis of those liberal values can the political, cultural, ethnic, and national narcissism of "others" (including Mexican multiculturalist academic zealots and some small fanatic groups in California who stress their "Aztec roots") be fought. Huntington does not see the contradiction of defending the liberal creed of the "I" from the standpoint of a WASPish "we." His obsession with the preservation of identity leads him to a notion of social purity. The history of that idea—call it identity fanaticism—is well known.

"The American people who achieved independence in the late eighteenth century," writes Huntington, "were few and homogeneous: overwhelmingly white thanks to the exclusion of blacks and Indians from citizenship." Perhaps it is my limited knowledge of English that makes me prefer the word "due" to the word "thanks" in such a sentence, but the reference to blacks is pertinent when culture is the topic of discussion. A little while ago I was listening to a famous American opera, written by a Jew, with black characters who speak in their own dialect of English: "Bess ... you is my woman now." Does Huntington need to be reminded of this chapter in American history? The descendants of those blacks, torn from their land, stripped of their culture, their freedom, and even their basic human dignity, created the biggest, healthiest, most original, and most imitated explosion of popular music in history. A dominant cultural form, developed by a dominated race. If Huntington doesn't really object to the use of the word "African American," why is he worried about the word "Mexican-American" that many people of the second or third generation use to identify themselves? The prefix does not make them less American. Quite the contrary. The prefix is a great American accomplishment.

'MEXICANS MARRY MEXICANS," Huntington states, thereby underscoring his doubts about the Mexican capacity for assimilation. Don't worry, sir. Mexicans understand the advantages and satisfactions of ethnic assimilation very well, because for centuries (in fact, since pre-Hispanic times) their history has been spectacularly inclusive. Not just ethnic mixing, but cultural mixing especially, is the particular gift of Mexico,

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a country in which Indians, blacks, Spaniards, and other Europeans have mingled and been able to live together through the centuries. Except for conspicuous exceptions—Chiapas and Yucatán, places where there was little mixing—there have never been racial wars or irredentist regions in Mexico. Far from conspiring against American society's best values, the Mexican tradition of mixing can introduce a pleasant note of coexistence that doesn't interfere with productivity and success. This is already happening, and not only in the tough arenas of agriculture and industry, but also in sports, entertainment, the media, public service, the sciences, and even the academy, as is proved by all those professors of Mexican origins whom Huntington cites.

"Mexico" does not stand for a fundamentalist religion. "Mexicans" are not a group of racialist or nationalist militants. California is not Bosnia. Mexican culture is not a threat to American culture. Mexicans will seek to become part of American culture (and American cultures: Korean, African, European, South American, Jewish, Anglo-Saxon), and to assimilate in the essential areas: language, business, politics, respect for the law, and, in the middle term, marriage. They will certainly maintain their differences in other areas: they will stick to their families, if they can bring them; they will opt for citizenship, if they are allowed; they will miss the land they came from for a generation or two; they will cling quite wisely to their cuisine; they will continue to be Catholics and to celebrate the holidays of the civic and religious calendar. They will be like and unlike their fellow citizens. They will show that one can live a richer life with multiple identities, and in this way they will contribute to new cultural models. So what's the problem? France and Germany can only dream of such immigrants.

Has Huntington ever seen the people that he scorns? Has he spoken to them? No, he didn't feel the need to see them or to speak to them: as he explained recently in *The New York Times Magazine*, his book is not about people, it is about "what people believe." But his book is most emphatically about people. And the people are there, if he wishes to encounter them, in the restaurants of Manhattan, on the streets of Queens, in Central Park on Sundays. Quiet, obedient, cautious, law-abiding, peace-loving (above all peace-loving), they toil to send money to their families, and they dream (in Spanish or in English, what difference does it make?) about a better future.

"Immigrants fought and died in American wars," Huntington writes. Perhaps he believes that Lieutenant General Ricardo Sánchez, of Mexican origin, who commanded the American forces in Iraq until recently, is an exception. But he isn't. There are 109,487 Hispanics enlisted in the United States Armed Forces—13.35 percent, a percentage greater than that of the Hispanic population with respect to the total population of the United States (35.3 million, 12.3 percent). Out of those 109,487, aside from Mexican Americans, in April 2003 there were 6,994 Mexican-born immigrants in active duty in the Army (2,667), the Air Force (907), the Marine Corps (1,102), and the Navy (2,318). It would be interesting to know how many soldiers born in the United States but of Mexican origin are fighting in Iraq right now. Huntington might be as surprised as I was by a photograph on the front page of *The New York Times* on April 21, in which several marines paid their respects at a memorial service for Corporal Daniel R. Amaya at their base outside Fallujah. Amaya—a twenty-two-year-old rifleman from Odessa, Texas—had been killed on April 11 in hostile fire in the province of Al Ambar. In his photograph online he does not look Mexican, but his last name (his father, Tom Amaya, lives in El Paso) is probably Mexican, just like the names of many other fallen soldiers. Under the letter "A" alone, besides Amaya, I found two Acostas, Andrade, Anguiano, Arriaga, Arroyave, Arsiaga, Avilés. Of the 678 members of the American armed forces killed in Iraq, there are at least eighty-two with a Hispanic last name (those with only a Hispanic mother, who might theoretically be added to the list, are unidentified). Some might be from the Philippines, but many are clearly of Mexican origin. The total is 12 percent. Would Samuel Huntington consider such a percentage high enough to qualify as an expression of national identity, loyalty, and patriotism? ■

Alan Taylor
Transformer

MASQUERADE: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DEBORAH SAMPSON, CONTINENTAL SOLDIER
By Alfred F. Young
(Alfred A. Knopf, 417 pp., $26.95)

I.

DURING A LONG AND ACcomplished career, Alfred F. Young has made a remarkable professional journey from the margins to the celebrated center of his chosen field, the study of the American Revolution. In decades past, the keepers of the scholarly mainstream delimited Young's work as "radical," a term he wore as a badge of honor, encouraging and defending like-minded historians. "What," he asks, "is a 'radical historian'—a historian of radicalism, a radical who is an historian?" Of course Young remains both, studying the relatively weak and poor in the past to shed light on persistent inequality and injustice in the present. This perspective has been deeply personal, driven by a sense of standing outside true respectability in his profession.

In recent years, however, Young has achieved a surprising degree of professional success. Seventy-eight years old, some thirteen years after retiring from an academic post, Young is at the peak of his productivity, influence, and professional standing. This shift is less a pilgrim's tale of his progress than a decisive, if belated, shift in the center of scholarly gravity toward the principles of inclusion that Young has championed for decades. Once deemed radical, his scholarly priorities have now become almost conventional. These include a focus on the history of protest movements by common people; the detailed biographical reconstruction of hitherto obscure lives; an exhaustive and innovative archival hunt for original documents to illuminate that obscurity; and a drive to communicate history to a broader audience through partnerships with museums and public historians.

Young began his career in the 1950s

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as a self-conscious outsider in a different world of now largely forgotten constraints. An urban Jew determined to study colonial and revolutionary America, Young ventured into an especially conservative field dominated by cultural conservatives ruling from a handful of Ivy League institutions. In a presidential address to the American Historical Association in 1962, the eminent historian Carl Bridenbaugh notoriously wondered whether the "urban-bred ... products of lower-middle-class or foreign origins" could understand, or should study, colonial or revolutionary America, which he imagined as overwhelmingly English. The address outraged the growing numbers of young Jewish scholars entering that field without a New England pedigree, and among them was Alfred F. Young, the son of an immigrant from Poland, via London's East End, to New York.

Although he was raised in a middle-class family, Young felt the pervasive anti-Semitism of leading institutions with quotas for "Hebrews." Denied admission to Harvard (despite graduating third in a high school class of four hundred), he instead attended nearby Queens College, where he wrote for the school newspaper and admired Vera Shlakman, a scholar of American radicalism and the urban working class. A few years later she fell prey to McCarthyism, fired for refusing to confess her political beliefs and associations to a congressional committee—a formative moment in the progress of Young's alienation. Graduating from Queens in 1946, Young pursued graduate study in American history at Columbia and Northwestern, where he identified as a scholar "with the outsiders in early America, ignored, marginalized, or patronized by insider historians." He struck out at the most prestigious postings in the Ivy League and taught instead "at non-elite schools"—the University of Connecticut, Paterson State Teachers College, and Northern Illinois University.

From the beginning, Young's scholarly radicalism has been more sensibility than system, more populist than Marxist. Drawn to stories of popular protest, he balked at any comprehensive theory forced on the diverse evidence: "I was attracted very little to the laws of history but very much to the side that stressed movements." As a student, Young voraciously read the Marxist historians and novelists of the Old Left, including Louis Hacker and Howard Fast. Although inspired by their subjects—rebellious slaves, Sons of Liberty, Jewish militants, labor unions—Young balked at their doctrinaire and formulaic approach. They imposed a "sterile economic determinism" while "ransacking the past for progressive forerunners; they showed little sense of critical inquiry." Ever questioning and probing, Young could never uncritically accept any orthodoxy, even from the left.

Rather than apply any historical theory rigorously, he relentlessly pursued new evidence in primary documents meant "to give voice to ordinary people." Uneasy with facile generalizations, he found that "diaries, letters, memoirs, and oral history [were] more mind-opening." During the 1960s his "unending infatuation with original sources" led Young and two co-editors to collect and publish fifty volumes of primary sources, many on subjects too long considered devoid of evidence: African American history, women's history, and popular protest movements. Radical in his interests, Young has tenaciously adhered to historians' conventional reliance on empirical evidence. "I am cautious about proof and conservative with my sources," he avers. With dogged determination, Young reversed the conservative charge that radicals impose their politics on the past. On the contrary, he asserts, the documented truth shall set us free. This stubborn empiricism also preserved his work from the glib relativism now practiced by poseurs to the left.

With his first book, in 1967, Young anticipated hostility from the conventional scholars. Driven to prove that his approach warranted respect, he cultivated an extraordinary mastery of archival research. Fifteen years in the making, *The Democratic Republicans of New York: The Origins, 1763–1797*, is a massive tome, six hundred pages dense with particulars. Young found and tapped dozens of little-known collections from far-flung archives, all of which he traveled to in a 1937 Ford, decades before microfilm and the Internet smoothed a scholar's way. Such painstaking attention to detail compelled readers to consider a novel interpretation of a classic issue: how the Jeffersonians had defeated the Federalists, vindicating a democratic understanding of the American Revolution. Challenging the conventional accounts, which paradoxically credited democracy to elite leaders such as Jefferson, Young advanced a political history "from the bottom up" by recovering the role of common voters and populist agitators such as Jedediah Peck. A small farmer who combined evangelical preaching with political mobilization, Peck helped to secure the electoral revolution of 1800–1801, which toppled the Federalist grandees from both state and national power.

This extraordinary book established Young in a paradoxical position within the profession: as "the dean of radical historians," he was an outsider become a variety of insider. Young applied his improved standing in academia to promote and to defend a new generation of radical historians who espoused the New Left during the late 1960s and early 1970s, and examined the American past to expose the foundations of racial inequality and overseas militarism. Bitterly critical of their own academic institutions for various complicities, these scholars sometimes paid with their jobs. Taking up their cause, Young defended academic freedom by gathering nationwide evidence of abuses, helping to lead a committee that produced a "Bill of Rights" for historians adopted by the American Historical Association in 1974, a dozen years after Bridenbaugh's dyspeptic address to that same group.

From 1968 to 1993, Young also promoted a younger generation of scholars by collecting original essays into three influential collections on the history of American radicalism in general, and the American Revolution in particular. Challenging the prior emphasis on the American Revolution as a consensual movement led by an elite, the essays attended to urban mobs, agrarian rebellions, evangelical religion, the cultural role of gender, and radical experiments in democracy. In retrospect, they also registered a shift in tone from the assertive optimism of the 1960s to the measured sobriety of the 1990s. The first volume finds present inspiration in the mobilization for the American Revolution, while the last collection focuses more on the often-disappointing aftermath to the struggle, finding as much to mourn as to celebrate. Rather than entirely blame the usual elite suspects, the last volume also attends to the contradictions and the limitations within the radicalism of the revolutionary generation.

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During the 1980s Young also pursued his collaborative talents in public history, making a double set of discoveries. First, he mastered the material culture of eighteenth-century America—prints, broadsides, clothing, crafts, and tools—as another means of understanding the common men and women of the revolutionary generation. Second, he recognized the potential of local historical societies and museums as partners who could help academic historians reach a broader audience. In particular, Young helped to develop a permanent exhibit on the revolutionary generation at the Chicago Historical Society, along with a vivid book (co-authored with Terry J. Fife and Mary E. Janzen), *We the People: Voices and Images of the New Nation*, which appeared in 1993.

Preoccupied by these collaborative projects in academic freedom, edited collections, material culture, and public history, Young struggled for the time to write another book, his study of Boston's working people in the making of the American Revolution. From an immense mass of notes and draft chapters, he did cull and polish several essays for publication in scattered venues. The best of the strong lot, "George Robert Twelves Hewes (1742–1840): A Boston Shoemaker and the Memory of the American Revolution," appeared in 1981. It touched a chord, becoming his most celebrated and influential work.

A LABORING MAN ACTIVE IN THE street politics of the Revolution, George Robert Twelves Hewes lived for nearly a century, long enough to become celebrated as the oldest survivor of the Boston Tea Party. In two late interviews published by his interlocutors, Hewes recalled casting the tea overboard side by side with John Hancock, the celebrated gentleman and patriot. In fact, Hancock was not present. That contradiction would lead a lesser historian simply to dismiss Hewes's doddering memory, but in the discrepancy Young finds powerful and pivotal meaning. The elderly Hewes understood the revolution as a symbolic moment of equality, when Hancock and other patriot gentlemen needed, and worked beside, common mechanics to resist British rule and to create a new republic.

The Hewes essay crystallizes the biographical method central to Young's scholarship. Uneasy with abstractions in isolation, he always grounds them in particular human lives recovered by painstaking and imaginative research in new or recondite sources bypassed by others. This approach refutes the double trap set by critics of the study of common people. On the one hand, they allege that too few documents survive. When sources do persist, such as Hewes's interviews, they disqualify the subject as unrepresentative, as exceptional. In this view, only the typical will do, and only the undocumented were typical. Young counters that common people often led extraordinary lives that defy our attempts to keep them anonymous and homogeneous. "Time and again, I was amazed at what you could find—if you only looked," he observes.

Addio del Passato

The final chord will not end without
Memories of dissonance, as also not
Without those long enfolding melodies
Made plausible thanks to some minor shifts,
Digressions, descants toward brief arias
In which the words will die before the last note lifts.

Meanwhile, behind the props and scenery
The world goes on as usual, the set
Too small and someone in the strings half flat,
The prima donna fat so cannot be
Consumptive, and Verdi in despair
As Violetta sings, *I have again returned to life!*

WYATT PRUNTY

II.

YOUNG'S LONG PURSUIT OF common biography now finds consummation in his most daring book. Its title will jar readers who assume that only men fought in the ranks during the War of the American Revolution. Dressed as a man and calling herself Robert Shurtliff, Deborah Sampson passed for seventeen months as a soldier in George Washington's army, seeing and surviving combat with the wounds to show for it. Nor was Sampson the only woman to attempt that feat—at least four others did so for brief periods, although American society considered it sinful and criminal to don the attire and pretend to the identity of the other gender. Not only did Sampson escape punishment, she became a post-war celebrity: the featured speaker on a lecture tour, the subject of a popular memoir, and the belated beneficiary of a congressional pension for her war service.

Given this sensational story, why has Sampson's life so long eluded a full and scholarly biography? A part of the answer is that so few documents by or about her have survived and reached a public archive—a common difficulty for anyone researching an eighteenth-century woman from an obscure family. Despite a century of avid investigation by antiquarians and genealogists, followed now by Young's relentless energy and ingenuity as a researcher, we still possess only a few scraps directly by or about her. We have her diary from one revealing year, 1802–1803; two letters to creditors; and several petitions to the Massachusetts state legislature or to Congress. No letter written to Sampson apparently survives, and only a handful of contemporary observations about her remain. There is a brief published address from her lecture tour and a much longer printed memoir, but close examination reveals that both are full of garish fictions and conventional stereotypes. Distorting like a mirror at a fun house, such sources can seem worse than nothing. On the one hand, they seduce the literal into believing that Sampson once sojourned among Indians, barely escaped cannibalism, and rescued a female prisoner by marrying her; or they can lead the unimaginative scholar to despair, to dismiss such texts as too thoroughly soiled by deception to warrant close investigation for biographical fact. "What does a biographer do," Young asks, "when his subject speaks so rarely in her own voice and her voice is strained through an author who blurs fact and fiction?"

TO PEEL AWAY THE LAYERS OF fiction in search of something like truth, who better than Alfred Young, given his masterful decoding of George Robert Twelves Hewes's tricky yet revealing memory? By extending his quest to women and the cultural operation of

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gender, Young seeks "to reconstruct a kind of life in the era of the American Revolution that has never been recovered." Indeed, here is the perfect case for Young's longstanding crusade to find the past of ordinary people and to rescue it from "the enormous condescension of posterity." Given Sampson's extremity as a documented cross-dressing soldier, critics would dismiss her as unrepresentative of anything common; but Young finds in her sensational story an illumination of the norms that she struggled against by making herself extraordinary.

If previous biographers noted the distortions in her memoir and her address, they blamed them entirely on the editor, Herman Mann, who has been cast as her exploiter seeking sensational effect. This interpretation reduces Sampson to Mann's passive victim, in print as in life. Young applies a shrewder perspective, depicting Sampson as Mann's collaborator in crafting fictions meant to preserve her secrets. Indeed, she often misled Mann. "I could see where she was leading him around by the nose," Young observes. "Very skilled at deception," Sampson "spent a good part of her life guarding a persona that obscured herself." Far more than mere obstacles to finding the veracious Sampson, those deceptions became the very fabric of her life and are now the essence of her biography by Young. Possessed of a powerful personality but constrained by a patriarchal society, Sampson expressed her agency by manipulating and deceiving others.

To glean facts from Mann's fictions, Young mines collateral sources about the contexts for Sampson's life: records kept by the towns where she lived, by the church she attended, and by the army she joined. Young also examines the objects she once touched, the houses she lived in, and the memories nurtured by her descendants. By "building up a body of independent evidence," Young "constructed a template on which I might lay the flimsy pieces of evidence about her and weigh what was likely, possible, or improbable." And, he frankly admits, "Which is which, where to draw the line, is sometimes vexing, and I am not sure I always get it right." Inviting the reader into the process of evaluation, Young explores the weaknesses as well as the strengths of his case, carefully distinguishing his speculations from his convictions.

Mann aptly characterized Sampson as a "young female of low birth and station" who rebelled against "a contracted female sphere." Although her maternal great-great-grandfather had been Governor William Bradford of the Plymouth Colony, the Bradfords and the Samsons (as her father spelled his name) had experienced a "downward mobility Americans have pushed out of their national myths." Deborah's father was a peripatetic farm laborer who abandoned the family in 1765, when she was five. Her indigent mother placed Deborah in another household to labor as an indentured servant for room and board until age eighteen. Although denied access to schooling by her master, a conservative farmer, Deborah taught herself with borrowed books, developing her mind and enhancing her aspirations. Freed in 1778, in the midst of a revolution, she supported herself as a spinner of thread and a weaver of cloth, boarding in a succession of neighbors' houses in Middleborough, Massachusetts. "A woman without a master," Sampson was an exception in a society that expected females to live with either father or husband. A robust five-foot-seven, Deborah was as tall and strong as most men, which along with her impoverished means and her forceful personality diminished her prospects for marriage.

She later explained her enlistment as an escape from a marriage arranged by her parents—a sure fiction. In fact, she ran away from a stultifying small town in search of the wider options enjoyed by young men with mobility. In general, the revolution inspired obscure people to imagine and to pursue new possibilities, which alarmed the gentlemen who dominated legislatures and commanded the army. Her halfway house to personal revolution was a local Baptist church, which she joined in late 1780, shortly before her twentieth birthday. Baptists rejected the dominant and orthodox Congregational Church that offered "an exquisite weekly instruction in the social ordering of the community by class, gender, age, and race." By comparison, the Baptists promoted a more spontaneous worship by egalitarian "brothers and sisters" in a plain meeting house without special, honored seating for an elite. While offering "a close-knit fellowship" of common men and women, the Middleborough Baptists also imposed a moral "discipline more severe than any she had known." She ran afoul of that discipline when she tried to enlist as a man in the spring of 1782. Quickly discovered, threatened with legal prosecution, and censured by her church, Deborah Sampson felt compelled to leave town.

In an age when women could not travel alone without sacrificing their respectability, Deborah redoubled her determination to pass as a man to escape Middleborough. Adopting the name Robert Shurtliff and walking to central Massachusetts, where she was a stranger, Deborah enlisted in the Continental Army on May 20, 1782. Desperate for soldiers, recruiting officers asked few questions and demanded no physical examination. Instead they proffered a uniform and a cash bonus (paid by local men to avoid conscription). She told none of this to Mann, obliging Young to recover it from church and military records. "She was," he concludes, "a person with enough of a sense of herself to become someone else."

But how did she sustain her deception for seventeen months of active service, often in the close quarters of military huts or under the physical and psychological duress of long marches and occasional firefights? Young argues that Sampson "accomplished her deception by becoming an outstanding soldier in the light infantry.... She hid herself as a woman ... by standing out as a man." Despite Washington's great victory at Yorktown in October 1781, the British army persisted in occupying New York City into 1783, pending the negotiation of a peace treaty. In the interim, small-scale patrols and skirmishes persisted in the notorious "neutral ground" north of the city but south of Washington's lines in upper Westchester County. Most of the patrols and fighting fell to elite units, the light infantry companies. Upon reaching Washington's army, Sampson immediately qualified for the light infantry because of her uncommon alertness, manifest intelligence, and physical strength.

Eager to please, she became a military paragon: responsive to orders, too self-disciplined to drink or swear, active under fire. "Ironically," Young notes, "the attributes needed to maintain her deception—to be alert, quick, and street smart—were the very ones that made her an ideal choice for the light infantry." She deflected scrutiny by winning the applause of her officers, who never expected that a model soldier could be a woman. It also helped her deception that

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so many of her fellow soldiers were "undersized, beardless boys" accepted by desperate recruiting officers. Far from standing out as weaker and smaller, she was conspicuous for her height, strength, and good conduct. And the slack sanitary standards of an eighteenth-century army spared Sampson from close attention to her body—even, apparently, when she suffered wounds.

DURING THE WINTER OF 1782–1783, Sampson became an orderly attached to General John Paterson, an appointment that reflected her officers' respect. In the spring of 1783, she went along when Paterson left New York for Philadelphia, where Sampson became gravely ill with a crippling fever. In a military hospital, a doctor discovered her secret and informed Paterson, who proved surprisingly sympathetic, permitting Sampson to remain in uniform until her honorable discharge with the rest of her regiment in October 1783.

Why did she escape the punishment and humiliation visited upon previous women discovered in uniform? Her timing was fortunate and her service was exemplary. With the war over and won, officers felt magnanimous, particularly toward a soldier who had served so well. "A rebel against the constraints of gender, as a soldier she was a conservative who sided with authority," Young observes. Overcompensating for her deception, she passed in a potentially hostile world—rather like a radical historian exceeding conservative dons in his attention to research detail.

Upon discharge, Sampson walked to eastern Massachusetts, still wearing men's clothing. She could hardly return to Middleborough, where neighbors and Baptists awaited with pent-up determination to punish and humiliate her. Instead, she proceeded to Sharon, in an adjoining county, where she stayed with a sympathetic aunt. At some point in 1784, Sampson reverted to women's clothing. In the spring of 1785 she married, bearing her first child seven months later—at a time and in a region where premarital pregnancy was common.

At first glance, she seemed extraordinarily fortunate in her husband, Benjamin Gannett Jr., the eldest son of an especially prosperous farmer and town leader. Apparently, her disreputable past had not precluded an advantageous marriage by the standards of her culture. "If, however, she anticipated life as the wife of a prosperous yeoman, she must have been deeply disappointed," Young notes. Despite being the patriarch's firstborn and namesake, Benjamin Gannett Jr. hardly basked in paternal favor. Apparently of limited intellect, the younger Benjamin procured very little property from his disappointed and grudging father, who favored his other sons. A tax list in 1798 reveals their possession of just forty-nine acres of hardscrabble land—barely enough to sustain a farm. In 1804 Paul Revere visited and reported that "they have a few acres of poor land, which they cultivate, but they are really poor." He added that Gannett Jr. was "of small force in business." Envious and mean in spirit, Benjamin brought even less joy to the marriage. Her later diary dwelled on her love for their three children, but did not even mention her husband. After 1790, at the age of thirty, she stopped bearing children, inspiring local gossip that she would no longer sleep with her husband.

DEEPLY FRUSTRATED, DEBORAH Sampson Gannett reached within her own formidable resources to rescue her material aspirations. Herman Mann explained that she possessed an "ambitious disposition" and a "taste for a more elevated stile of life" than Gannett could provide. Rather than hide her military service in conventional shame, during the 1790s she began to highlight it for financial gain. In 1792, she boldly petitioned the Massachusetts state legislature for her back pay as a soldier. Far from dismissing her request, the legislators awarded the money, accompanied by their praise for her courage and virtue.

She then enlisted Herman Mann, an ambitious and impressionable young schoolteacher, to write her life story, which he published in 1797. Nothing like it had appeared in America, where the rare biographies of women dwelled on their passivity and piety as exemplars. American women were supposed to avoid calling attention to themselves, but Deborah Sampson Gannett pushed her story into print, accompanied by an engraving of her likeness commissioned by Mann. Feminine in attire, Deborah bravely gazes directly back at the reader within a frame of musket, sword, battle flags, and American eagle. Although filled with absurdities and badly composed, the book sold its entire run of fifteen hundred copies, lifting its subject "from local notoriety to the status of a regional celebrity."

Proudly bearing copies of the book, she traveled to New York City brazenly to introduce herself to the poet Philip Freneau, who had excellent political connections. Something of a radical, Freneau warmed to her bold self-promotion. No fool and no shrinking violet, Deborah sought nothing less than a literary lion and political activist to craft her petition to Congress for a pension. But very few veterans got pensions unless they could prove both a dependence on charity and a crippling disability as a consequence of war wounds or hardships. Despite her eloquent petition, Sampson had a rather weak case—given that her husband owned a farm and she could travel to New York without evident difficulty. Still, as Young sees it, her petition "was an assertion of the right of a woman to equal treatment regardless of her marital status." Ill-prepared for such an assertion, Congress rejected her request.

Undaunted, persistent, and ingenious, Deborah Sampson Gannett took her cause on the road, organizing a speaking tour that in 1802–1803 traversed New England and eastern New York, covering about a thousand miles and delivering at least twenty lectures to paying audiences (admission was twenty-five cents). Never before had an American woman staged a public lecture tour, defying the convention that women should remain at home, away from a viewing public, if they meant to enjoy respectability. "As America's first itinerant woman orator," Young explains, "Deborah Sampson Gannett was even more of a pioneer than she was as a woman soldier." Not only did she tour alone and speak publicly, but she also donned her military uniform and occasionally dazzled audiences with her dexterity at handling a musket through the complicated maneuvers of the manual of arms. A shrewd manager and promoter, she posted notices in local newspapers and disseminated handbills presenting "Mrs. Gannett (Late Deborah Sampson), The American Heroine." Her masterful address began with a modest apology that her military service was "a breach in the decorum of my sex unquestionably," but then asserted vindication on the grounds of an overwhelming, irresistible patriotism.

For this tour we have, at last, a detailed source in her own hand: a diary listing her expenditures and offering ob-

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servations. She mourned her absence from her three young children (if not from her husband), but effused at the acceptance that she won from audiences of genteel people. Relieved at escaping catcalls, she basked in her greatest coup: enhancing her respectability while performing as a woman who had dressed as a man. She even won warm welcomes from former officers, including General Paterson, who hosted her for a happy month. Above all, "the diary reveals a physical stamina, a willingness to take risks, a capacity to be on her own, a perseverance, a resourcefulness, and an attention to minute detail, as well as her social skills, befriending and charming strangers."

By promoting her celebrity, the tour benefited Sampson's renewed bid, in late 1803, for a congressional pension. This time she succeeded, winning $4 per month, apparently thanks to critical support from Paterson, who had won election to Congress from New York. In 1809 she boldly asked for more, a retroactive pension to begin from her discharge in 1783, a lump sum (including interest) of $960—enough to buy a small farm. To support that extraordinary claim, she insisted that she had been crippled by wounds during the war and was unable to work subsequently. Congress refused that bid, but in 1821 she secured a larger pension under the terms of an expanded pension act of 1818, raising her monthly pay to $8—an income almost unheard of for a woman. Admiring her persistence, Young concludes that if her husband was "'of small force in business,' she was of large force."

Of Herman Mann, Young writes, "He clearly was taken by her, and at times, as we have seen, he was taken in." Young is also clearly taken by Sampson, an assertive woman and war veteran who refused to accept the constraints of gender and poverty. But is he also taken in by her? For most of the book, Young subjects her claims to a careful, indeed impressive, scrutiny. But in the end he, too, succumbs to her charm. In seeking a $960 payment, Sampson asked for far more than Congress usually granted to other veterans who were crippled. Far from being disabled, as she claimed, Sampson could travel a thousand miles to deliver twenty lectures. In petitioning Congress she also deceived by claiming service at the celebrated battle of Yorktown (six months before she enlisted). Yet Young treats the congressional rejection as a great injustice. He also accepts her special pleading in pension applications of persisting poverty in her later years. But her pension, combined with the death of Benjamin Gannett Sr. in 1813, substantially improved her material circumstances, making her far from "indigent," as she claimed. The patriarch again bypassed his son and namesake, instead bestowing most of his land on his grandson, Earl Bradford Gannett. But he was the son of Deborah and Benjamin Gannett Jr. Although Earl held legal title, his parents shared in the benefits, moving into a much larger and newly built house on the premises. That house permitted the display of middle-class gentility: a parlor with tea set and landscaping including willow trees. An 1813 tax list valued Earl's new property at $1,013 and his father's share at $781—assessments that probably placed both men near the median property holding in Sharon. But Young seems determined to keep Deborah poor to the very end by mustering Earl's own probate inventory from 1845 (eighteen years after she had died) to reveal "how little wealth two generations of Gannetts had accumulated since 1813." On the contrary, the inventory reveals a farm of 121 acres valued at $2,585 plus $220 in household property. For Sharon in 1845, that farm must have been above average in both size and value. And it certainly represented more than a doubling over the value recorded on the 1813 tax list.

Deborah achieved her dreams of middle-class gentility thanks to her abilities, her persistence, and her guile. Transcending skeptical neighbors and an inept husband, she wrested more from Congress than other veterans. Her secret was her bravura performance of the impoverished and disabled soldier. With consummate skill, she charmed and manipulated genteel patrons, including Paul Revere, who attested to her poverty and loaned her money. By recognizing her persistent manipulation of appearances, Young would have strengthened his fundamental case that she was no victim. Then again, by captivating her historian—and a new generation of readers—Deborah Sampson renews her extraordinary ability to escape from the constraints of her gender and her class of origin. To do so, she had to deceive not once, but throughout her life and beyond. ■

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CAMBRIDGE DIARIST

Bully for Him

THE GREAT MENTIONER—IN this case, *National Journal's Hotline*—has put together a list of some 70-odd people who have been recommended (by whom, no one knows) to be John Kerry's running mate. Some of them, presumably, have been leaked by the Kerry campaign itself in an effort to appease or appeal to various constituencies: Representative John Lewis of Georgia, for instance, or former Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, or House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi. Five Republicans make the list: John McCain, of course, along with former Senator Warren Rudman, Senator Chuck Hagel, ex–Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Christie Whitman, and Secretary of State Colin Powell. There are several zillionaires (which is exactly what the ticket does not need), including Jay Rockefeller and Jane Harman; and, of course, the two patriarch paladins of the party's squishy foreign policy wing: 9/11 Commission Vice Chairman and ex-Representative Lee Hamilton, and former Senator George Mitchell, now chairman of Disney and the author of one of the many failed plans for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. The author of the last such plan, embittered retired General Anthony Zinni, is also on this inventory. (Another creator of another Middle East peace plan—the recently resigned CIA director, George Tenet—is on no one's list for anything.)

NONE OF THESE, IT'S SAFE TO ASSUME, is a serious option for Kerry. I don't know who is. But the likely candidates aren't an impressive bunch. Retired General Wesley Clark is a touch goofy, as his performance in the primary attests. And, if Clark's dalliances with Michael Moore–style extremism were too stirring, Senator Bob Graham's candidacy wasn't stirring enough. Indeed, he seems congenitally incapable of rousing excitement in anyone, and aloof dullness is hardly what the Kerry campaign needs more of. Before he became governor of New Mexico, Bill Richardson spent part of a day in 1997 in Washington to interview Monica Lewinsky about a job at the U.S. mission at the United Nations. Why would anyone want to open up that can of worms again (except, of course, the Bush campaign)? Governor Tom Vilsack of Iowa would be seen as political payback for the senator's victory in the caucuses. I can hear the slogan: "Vilsack, payback." Richard Gephardt speaks to the Democratic core, but the Democratic core does not win general elections. (It didn't even place him in the top three in Iowa.) I have nothing to say about Evan Bayh, either for or against, and, I suspect, neither does almost anyone else. I respect John Edwards and supported him financially in the late primaries. He'd certainly satisfy me. But Kerry won't refract well off his graces, and so I suspect he simply won't go there.

MY CHOICE WOULD BE ELIOT SPITZER, the attorney general of New York, the subject of one recent TNR article ("Consumer Party," December 2, 2002) and the co-author of another ("Bull Run," March 22). Call me hyperbolic, but Spitzer reminds me of Theodore Roosevelt—not the TR of bluster, but the TR of remedy and of vision. "Our basic problem in the twentieth century," Roosevelt argued, "is to see that the marvelously augmented powers of production bequeathed to us by the nineteenth century be made to administer to the needs of the many rather than be exploited for the profit of the few." Roosevelt was a trustbuster, and, through trust-busting, he aimed to mute the natural avarice of capitalism. The great domestic American achievement of the last 40 years is that the basis of our society—our prosperity—has rested on the most democratic capitalism in the world. Ownership of the means of production, to use a Marxist term, is more widely diffused in the United States than anywhere else. But that diffusion is now under threat. The foundations of the public equity markets are mutual funds, pension funds, and small investors; yet these foundations are now eroding. Spitzer has set himself the task of restoring the trust that has been palpably betrayed by several mutual-fund conglomerates, by many of our biggest investment banks, by scores of megacorporations, and by the big accounting firms. And do not think for a moment that the huge and fancy law firms were absent from this rush after illicit mammon. The scandals have become endemic. It was as if, in the country's best hospitals, suddenly the doctors had furtively recanted the Hippocratic oath.

SPITZER HAS WAGED HIS EFFORT meticulously. He does not want the market to crumble, and he is not engaging in class warfare. It baffles me that most other Democrats have shied away from these issues except in occasional inflammatory and irrelevant rhetoric. Maybe the Democrats are as dependent for the financing of their campaigns on Wall Street bankers as are the Republicans. This is not a partisan issue, and the disgrace stains both parties. But, if anybody has labored to protect the invested savings of the citizenry, it is Spitzer who could give the Democrats a much-needed issue advantage. There is no exotic calculus about it: Spitzer is a popular hero because he is the one politician to have done something concrete for all the people. He has led the corps of state attorneys general in specific and winnable legal battles against corporate criminality.

SPITZER'S MIND CUTS SHARP AND runs deep. His liberalism is of the muscular sort. I suspect he does not believe that the Patriot Act is the greatest danger to American life since September 11. He would assure undecided voters precisely on the issues that give them discomfort with Kerry's own undecidedness, which is almost psychological, rather than merely political. With Spitzer, you really know where you and he stand. Yes, he lacks foreign policy experience. But that is Kerry's chief credential, for better or for worse, and he doesn't need to have it augmented. And, yes, he would break the old rule against nominating running mates from adjoining states. But Bill Clinton and Al Gore broke that taboo twelve years ago. New York may not be a swing state, but it is telling that, in that harshest of environments, Spitzer may now be the most popular politician there. I suspect he'd be pretty popular in Ohio and Missouri and Florida as well.

MARTIN PERETZ

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Lessons of Abu Ghraib

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During my years covering the Pentagon I followed enough military investigations designed to cover up incompetence, malfeasance, and downright stupidity to turn even the most credulous reporter into a skeptic. Whether it was the downing of an Iranian airbus, raunchy behavior at a Tailhook convention, or a fatal explosion aboard an antique battleship, the first mandate of investigative panels was always to protect the reputation of the service and the "good old boys" who ran it.

Not so the military's investigation into the sordid goings on at Abu Ghraib prison. Here the area command reacted swiftly to soldier Joseph Darby's charges of torture and abuse. Major General Antonio Taguba put the blame squarely where it belonged, on senior planners and commanders responsible for dealing with Iraqi detainees. From Taguba there were no mind-numbing homilies about the small handful of bad soldiers obscuring the good work of many. Here the problem was "systemic." It went to the core of any military operation—training, discipline, and leadership. Or, to put the matter bluntly, **the soldiers supervising thousands of Iraqi prisoners were ill-prepared for the task and permitted to rampage through the prison like a band of vigilantes while senior intelligence officials—uniformed and civilian—may well have egged them on.** Unit commanders were nowhere in sight.

And why did U.S. security forces find themselves in this predicament? For the same reason U.S. combat forces have suffered opposition so fierce that for a period military commanders in Iraq openly courted Baathist Republican Guard personnel and fanatics serving in the militia of radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. And for the same reason that they are currently permitting any number of private militias to flourish. Because there simply have not been enough forces to handle the situation that has actually developed on the ground—as opposed to the best-case scenarios for which top Pentagon strategists had prepared.

There was, of course, no harm in believing that U.S. troops with their state-of-the-art weaponry would make short work of Iraqi forces, that they would be welcomed as liberators by long-oppressed Iraqis, that they would find the thirst for democracy acute in this acrid authoritarian environment, and that democracy and a market economy would bring all but the most extreme into the fold. No harm, that is, so long as your planning accommodates less-optimal developments.

The Pentagon's planning failure was evident from the first moments of the occupation as ferocious mobs rampaged through Baghdad and other cities while undermanned U.S. forces watched on the sidelines. In the weeks and months to follow, the rebels struck infrastructure targets, seized massive arms caches, and demolished hotels, marketplaces, and UN headquarters while increasingly bold and sophisticated resistance fighters took a savage toll of American lives.

All this has served to increase the stakes in Iraq to the point where **even most prewar doves now recognize that a defeat there will have a catastrophic effect on both the war against terrorism and U.S. interests in the Middle East.** In an ironic, almost bizarre way, the Pentagon's own planning failures have given it a final window of opportunity to get things right, to move the personnel and equipment to Iraq needed to do the job on the battlefield, in the political community, and, yes, even in the prisons. What is needed is fortitude, not fig leafs. Generations to come will pay the price of failure.

—Robert Zelnick

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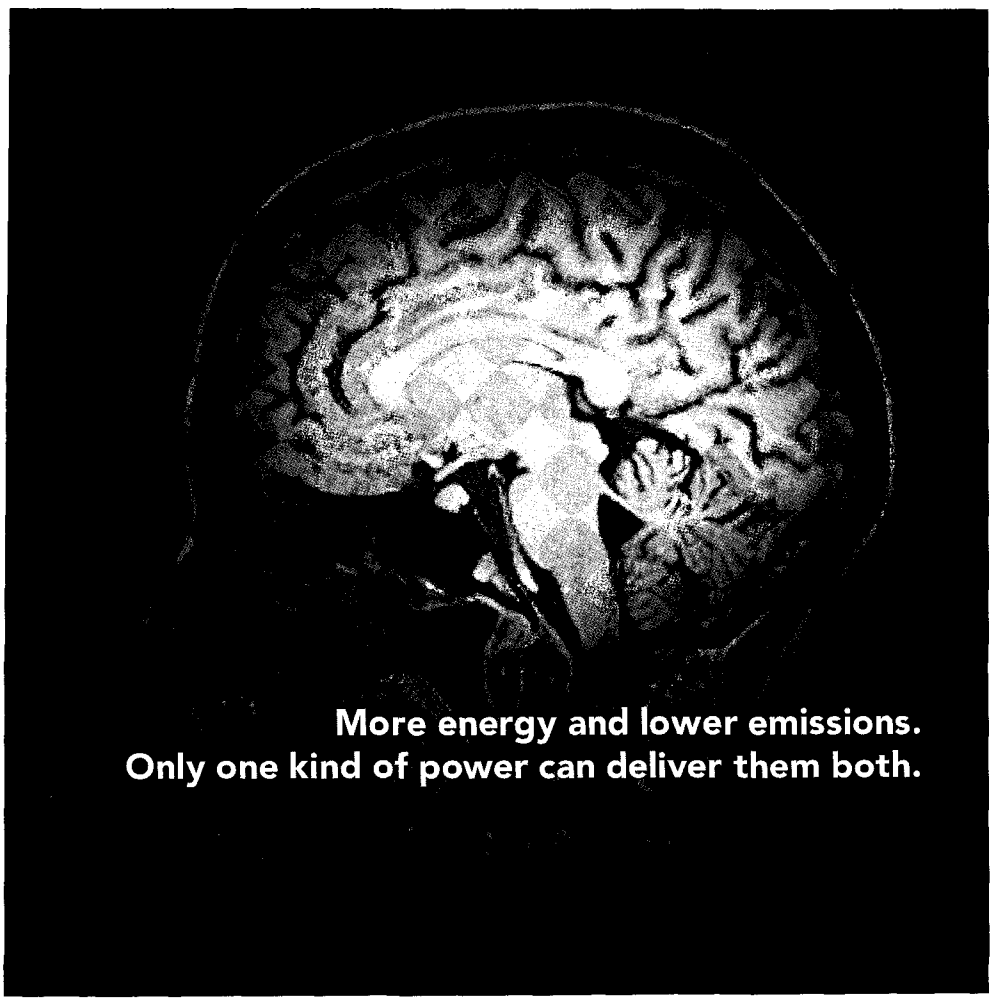

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